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ROMAN BRIDGE ON THE LYS, VALLEY OF AOSTA

By Cav. S. Giampetri

R.I.B.A. Collection

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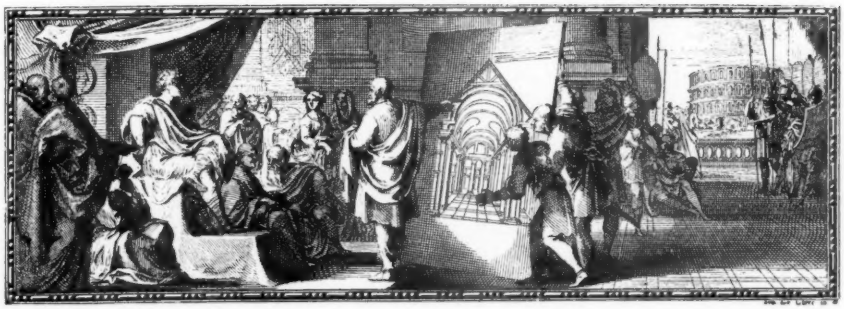


# Modern Banks, with Special Reference to the new Midland Bank Head Office

BY J. ALFRED GOTCH, HON. M.A. (OXON), F.S.A., PAST PRESIDENT R.I.B.A.

[*Read before the Royal Institute of British Architects on Monday, 18 February 1929*]

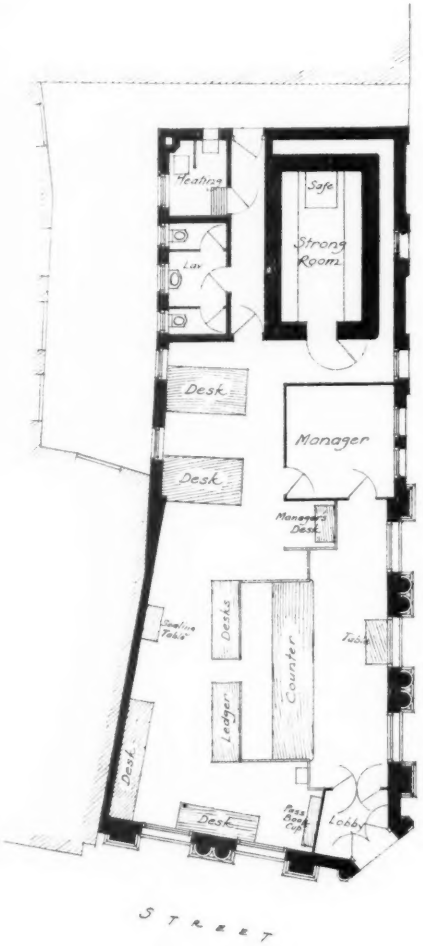
AS it happens, I have a hereditary connection with banking, for my father and grandfather were for many years country bankers of the old school. I mention this merely by way of indicating how vast are the changes that have come about in the banking world during the last century. The old-fashioned country bank served the needs of the country-side within a radius of some ten or twelve miles ; it issued its own notes ; and although the volume of business was not large—as size goes nowadays—the responsibilities were quite heavy enough. The premises were unpretentious, the staff did not exceed three or four, the strong room was represented by a safe which would bring a smile to the faces of the great safe makers of the present day. But no doubt the burglars of that time would equally excite the merriment of their expert descendants ; and yet within their limits and ambitions those ancient marauders were skilful enough. I know that one of the fraternity, a notable thief called Huffey White, who was caught, or, as we should say, arrested, for robbing the Leeds mail on the highway near Kettering, and was detained in custody until his fate was settled—this gentleman very much astonished my progenitors by telling them the amount of their balance on some particular day. This information he could only have obtained by entering the bank and examining the books, but no trace of his incursion disclosed itself.

As time went on banks increased in size, burglars increased in skill, and the precautions against them increased in efficiency, and always kept ahead in the competition. The increase in the size of the banks came about by the absorption of those whose business extended over perhaps 30 or 40 parishes by others whose operations extended over two or three counties, and these in their turn, after some 40 years or so, were absorbed by still larger concerns. These larger concerns gradually amalgamated into several groups, until at the present time almost all the financial business of the whole kingdom is carried on by some half dozen huge corporations. The Midland Bank, Limited, alone has between 1,700 and 1,800 branches, most of which are larger than any of the old country banks. The advantages of this policy form no part of the present subject, but this I think is obvious—that we are no longer faced from time to time by those financial crises which brought ruin to many of the private enterprises.

In almost every direction the whole tendency of the present day seems to be towards amalgamation. What are called " multiple shops " appear in every town, and the old-fashioned shop-keeper, who knew the rationale of his business, did repairs on the premises, and was not merely a salesman, is threatened with gradual extinction. The modern bank is not unlike the multiple shops in relation to its business, although not in its effect on the community. That is to say, it receives its impetus from headquarters ; from that source it is guided in its policy, and to that source it makes its returns. The consequence is that headquarters, or " Head Office " as it is called, is an affair of vast magnitude. The multiplicity of its activites shall be touched upon in due course ; but it will be not without interest to take a glance first of all at the comparatively small units which it controls.

The first thing to be done in starting a new branch, or in building new premises, is to get a suitable site. This has to be found, if possible, in the busiest part of the town, and again, if possible, at a prominent corner ; and this for two reasons : to have a conspicuous building, and obtain light from two sides, for a cheerful, well-lighted bank is desirable both for the sake of the staff and for the encouragement and satisfaction of the customers.

The internal arrangement is quite simple. There is the public space, readily approached from a small vestibule that checks undue draughts. This public space is anything from 7 to 10 feet wide and has the counter along one side and a wall (probably the external wall) along the other, against which are a small writing table, a seat, and an umbrella stand. The counter is at least 4 feet wide in order to prevent undesirable reaching over on the part of the public. The cashiers stand behind it within an enclosure which keeps out all intruders, and preserves the space for them alone. Below the counter top are tills, ingeniously fitted to hold in safety the various denomination of notes and the silver, and also a number of drawers, and in the enclosing screen behind the cashiers are small cash cupboards, one to each cashier, in which bags of silver or copper are stored ready for use, and where any documents or important papers can be placed until suitably disposed of. Immediately behind the screen is the ledger desk, with the small ledgers of all the customers upon it, and where the vouchers, cheques and other matters handed over by the cashiers are dealt with. Each cashier has 6 feet length of counter space to himself, furnished with identical fittings. The space behind the ledger desks is taken up with clerks' desks, each clerk having




BANK AT WORKSOP

4 feet of working space. There is also a sealing table and a pass-book cupboard. In addition to this apparatus for carrying on the routine work of the bank, there is the manager's room, a sanctum wherein the manager can see customers in private on all kinds of matters, including the investment

of superfluous funds, or the warning that the limit of the overdraft has been reached. This room has to be readily entered both from the public space and from behind the enclosures which separate the public from the staff; and it is not always easy to determine whether it should be placed handy to the entrance or at the farther end of the public space, a position which enables anyone interested in the matter to note the expression on the customer's face after his interview with the manager; an expression which may indicate joy or grief or merely indifference. The solution of the problem, as a rule, depends not so much on this consideration, as on those of providing the general accommodation of the bank in the most convenient way.

The most important feature in a bank, from the practical point of view, is the strong-room. This must be both fire-proof and burglar-proof. It must be convenient of access, either on the ground floor or in the basement. If the exigencies of ground floor space require that it should be in the basement, a suitable lift has to be provided to hold the special trollies upon which the books are transported. The strong room itself must be of a size large enough to hold a safe, deed boxes, customers' plate chests or other valuables, and, indeed, anything that requires safe custody. It is desirable to isolate it, that is, to surround it with a narrow passage, enabling complete inspection to be made when desirable. The width of the passage being only 18 inches, there is insufficient room for the free working of burglarious implements. Upon the construction of the strong room depends the safety of all the bank's cash and the property of customers. Bars to windows give an added sense of security; and publicity—that is, an avoidance of external spaces that are out of observation—is a great deterrent to nefarious operations. But after all, with a suitable strong room the burglar may be defied. Strong room doors are now impregnable, and we have satisfied ourselves that with walls, floor and ceiling of suitably reinforced concrete, no burglar could effect an entrance during the longest period that a bank is likely to be left unoccupied. There is no advantage, as it used to be thought, in having the manager living over the bank. So clearly has this been established that many branch premises are of one story only, the view being held that a bank should be an entity to itself, and not have its individuality lessened by shops or offices in connection with it. "We are bankers" it is said, "not property owners." Against this idea it is sometimes urged that a loss of revenue is entailed, and of course in large towns it is generally good policy to provide offices, particularly if they can be let to important customers.

In addition to the accommodation already indicated there must be store rooms for stationery and vouchers, and also suitable lavatory accommodation. The store-rooms, and more especially the basement, ought to be absolutely dry and properly ventilated. To obtain a dry basement is not always easy, but it can generally be secured by providing what may be thought of as an asphalt-lined tank, one in which the asphalt lining is absolutely without a break. When the necessary cross-walls, concrete staircase and area windows are taken into consideration, it requires some ingenuity to contrive such an unbroken lining.

The most convenient way of heating is by low-pressure hot-water pipes and radiators; such as can be repaired if necessary by local plumbers. Some managers plead for an open fire in their own rooms, and when the flue can be taken up with the heating flue there is no great difficulty; but, as a rule, an open fire is discouraged, if only from the fact that it entails a second kind of fuel with separate storage place. The heating chamber is either in the basement, or is sunk just deep enough for the boiler to do its work. In either case, particular care must be taken to make it water-tight; otherwise, early in some winter a message will come that the heating chamber is flooded, and they can't get a fire.

As to the design of the exterior, probably everyone will have his own notions. But the view that commends itself to me is that a bank should look like a bank; it should suggest the stability and safety of the company; it should inspire confidence in the customer, and attract his approval; but not be so grand or ornate as to cause him to think that money is being extravagantly spent. I confess that I am not a great believer in the doctrine that a bank ought to conform closely to the style of the town in which it is built. If it is quietly and sensibly designed it will not jar with anything; on the contrary, it will add zest to the appearance of the place. One quality most serviceable to the banking business in any direction is common sense. When we first began to design for the Midland

Bank, the idea that held the field was that as soon as a stranger set eyes on a branch building he should at once recognise it as a Midland Bank. The consequence is that there is a general family resemblance among many of the designs shown on the walls, but the particular circumstances of each site produced variations of the general type. Another factor in the external design is that the name of the Bank must be conspicuously placed.

Bank at Witham, Hull

In the interior I am persuaded that no great architectural effort is desirable, and certainly nothing that in any way would hamper the daily work of the staff. People do not go into a bank to admire architecture, but to transact their business and go away. So the aim should be to fill their subconsciousness with a sense of convenience, spaciousness, cheerfulness and harmonious colouring. But if a customer is alive to something more than this, and takes a look round, the detail should be sufficiently good and careful to interest him.

From these branches, which to the general public are the outward manifestation of the business of banking, we must pass to the great building where their control is centred—the Head Office in Poultry and Princes Street. And here I should like to say what is probably known to all of you, that while, with regard to the new Head Office, my partners and myself are responsible for the general conception, for the plan, for the detailed arrangements worked out in constant consultation with the Heads of the Bank, for the control of the operations, and the numerous negotiations necessary in carrying out a building on such a site, we have had the invaluable collaboration of Sir Edwin Lutyens in regard to the façades and the decorative details generally. And, further, I should like to say that the work from day to day, and the emergencies that have continually arisen, have been dealt with by my partner and nephew, Mr. Laurence Gotch, who spends most of his time on the spot, and discusses and puts into practicable shape the requirements of the various departments of the Bank.

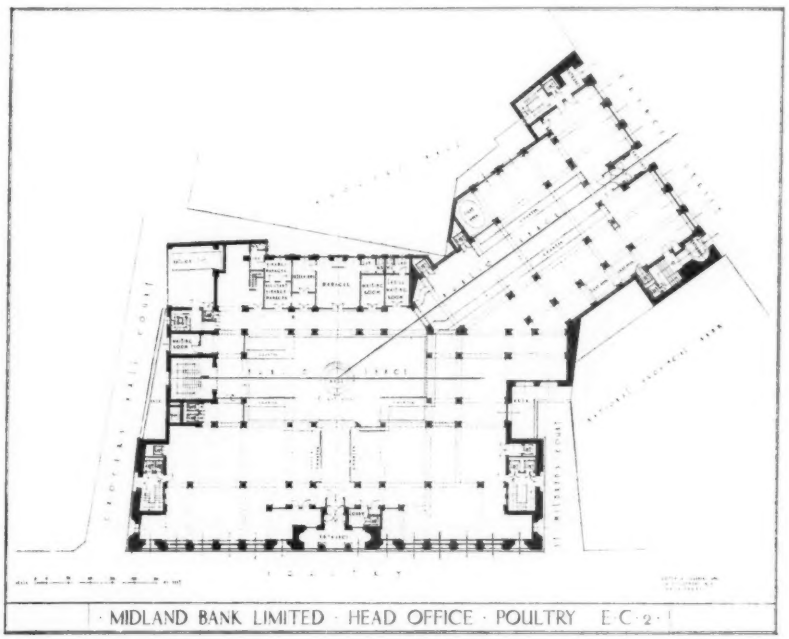
The supervision of so many separate businesses as I have mentioned, and of the buildings in which they are carried on, implies in itself a considerable staff. But this is only one of the many departments

which have to be accommodated in Head Office. The requirements necessitated six floors above ground and three basements, with a total floor space of something like seven acres.

The bulk of the work is, of course, clerical, and is carried on by clerks, all of whom have their particular and limited functions to perform. But there is a great army of them—approaching 2,000 in number with a possible increase to 2,900—and they have officers over them with varying responsibilities. Or to change the simile to one more peaceful and appropriate, the concern may be likened to a great factory with managers of the many different departments and ultimately controlled by a board of directors. From this idea it follows that the bulk of the space at command has to be clear floor space, as open as possible, and with as few columns as the construction will allow, well lighted, heated and ventilated. But it must not be thought that the rooms are finished in the bald manner suitable to a factory. The floor space being clear, it can be divided by partitions to suit any conditions that may be found necessary, and only in special cases need these partitions be more than about 6 feet high, with the result that the rooms are light and airy. As a matter of fact three of the floors are arranged in this way.

The ground floor is devoted to the business with which the general public is chiefly concerned, the paying in and out of the money. It serves much the same purposes as the provincial branches, only on a much larger scale. It is fitted with counters and enclosures, behind which are the clerks' desks. But there are, in addition, other special departments connected with the financial world, such as the stock office, securities, and new issue. It would be beside the mark, and only tend to confusion to enumerate in detail the whole of the matters that have to be transacted in this large room, but an important development is the provision of managers' rooms, waiting rooms, and rooms for interviews in connection with American, foreign, and overseas departments.

In addition to the army of clerical workers there




Ground Floor

are, of course, the numerous managers, many of whom have to have separate rooms, there are the directors who have to have a board room, and, in accordance with the increasing custom, facilities for providing lunch for the whole staff have to be provided, with suitable kitchen accommodation. The building, therefore, above ground (for the underground part will come later), resolves itself into this: the ground floor is for daily banking business; the next three floors are what may be called the factory floors; on the floor above them are the rooms for the chairman, the managing directors, general managers and assistant general managers, with their secretaries. To these rooms, especially to those of the chairman and general managers, many persons of importance come, and here accordingly they have to be spacious and handsome with a lounge where visitors can wait in comfort and with such patience as nature may have bestowed upon them. There is a special lift devoted to the service of these rooms, and for the ready access of the directors to the board room. As the giving of lunch is now an important branch of all business in the city, the directors will eventually have a fine luncheon room in which will be incorporated a handsome ceiling removed from Devonshire House at the time of its destruction. The chairman will also have a private luncheon room, wherein, possibly, may be discussed matters affecting the whole financial world, and even influence the stability of governments.

On the fifth floor is the board room, a large apartment 71 feet long, 28 feet 6 inches wide, and 28 feet high. Here there seemed to be an opportunity for great architectural display, but common sense asserted itself, and all those concerned, the future users of the room and designer, were insistent that it should be as nearly as possible perfect for sound; that with a board of directors numbering something like 50, every person, no matter where he was sitting, should be able to hear the chairman and his co-directors speaking in an ordinary conversational voice. We consulted Mr. Hope Bagenal, and, acting on his advice, a result has been achieved which is already highly satisfactory, and will, I believe, be completely so when the room is finished and finally furnished. The principles adopted were quite simple. The room is a plain oblong with no projecting architectural features. The ceiling is curved to a particular radius, is perfectly plain and of hard material, which reflects the sound downwards. The walls are panelled for about half their height, the panelling inducing a certain amount of resonance. Above the panelling the walls are to be hung with tapestry, which will absorb the sound waves, and the floor is to be covered with a thick carpet, which also will prevent reverberation. The carpet and the tapestry have still to be placed in position, but a temporary substitute for the tapestry, in the shape of canvas stretchers, has been found useful. Even in its incomplete state and without the help of the carpet and tapestry, it is easy to carry on a conversation in an ordinary voice between people at opposite ends of the room, provided their enunciation is distinct. The tapestry is to be in large panels with a quiet, even background of floral pattern, with borders somewhat brighter; and in the panels, with all the richness and vivacity that heraldry imparts, will be the arms of the principal cities and towns in which the bank has its branches. The outcome will, I hope, be both dignified and interesting, as well as fulfilling the practical purposes of comfortable deliberations.

But the board room, of course, was not the only place where the consideration of acoustics was important, although it was the place where they had to be most delicately handled. The ground floor, where busy operations are liable to cause much clatter, and the clerks' rooms, where typewriters and other labour-saving machines are continually clicking, required particular attention; but by the use of cabot quilting on the ceilings, and a non-resonant material on the floor, the difficulties were surmounted, and in none of the rooms is the noise distracting. Even the sounds from the street are muffled. In the telephone rooms, cabot quilting on the ceilings, acoustic plaster on the walls, and a rubber covering on the floors have served to engender what is described as an almost uncanny quiet.

It will be readily understood that with a population of something like 2,000, with an extension to nearly 3,000, the provision of adequate lavatory accommodation was a considerable problem, especially as each person had to have a locker for his or her exclusive use. Accommodation had to be provided for the clerical staff, men and women; for managers, directors, general managers and chairman; for the kitchen staff and that body of helpers upon whom the comfortable working of the establishment so much depends—the engineering staff.

Having thus briefly indicated the arrangement of

the six floors above ground, we will go below ground, where there are three floors of basements, two of which are chiefly devoted to enormous strong rooms, while the third and lowest is mostly given up to engines, boilers, ventilating plant, and all that is accessory to them. Part of the first basement—the one immediately below the ground floor—is set apart as a safe deposit for the storage of customers' own papers or other valuables, and there is a series of cubicles or small private rooms to which customers can have their deed boxes brought for private and leisurely inspection. This department is approached from the banking hall by a handsome marble staircase, and its cheerfulness is increased by a light-well in the middle of the floor space of the banking hall.

Each strong room, or group of strong rooms, is what may be called an island—that is, it is surrounded by a corridor for perambulation, so that it can be under continual observation. The corridors are protected by grilles, through which only a very limited number of persons have a right or possibility of access. The strong rooms vary in importance, from those which contain bullion to those in which the books are kept when not in use. For the easier and safer handling of the bullion, there is a large lift upon which the lorry that brings it can be lowered to the strong room.

The lighting of the building was one of the first considerations in arranging the plan. Fortunately the site enabled the outer walls, with judicious setting back in places, to be used throughout the greater part of their length. This circumstance and the introduction of a spacious light-well made it possible to light the whole building above the ground line with direct daylight. Another preliminary point was to get the staircases and lifts so placed as to give convenient access without unduly cutting up the floor space ; and another was to arrange the steel stanchions—for the skeleton of the building is of steel construction—so as to be economical in regard to the span of the girders, and yet to cause as little obstruction as possible, and at the same time to subserve the architectural treatment. But these are only a few of the numerous considerations that will occur to every architectural mind. Although the building is of steel construction, the stone façades are of true masonry, self-supporting, but tied into the main building.

It would be quite impossible on the present occasion to go deeply into the details of so large a building. The heating, the ventilation, the lighting, the lifts, the system of disposing of dust, would, among other things, furnish material for separate discussions. But having broadly indicated the general requirements and how they have been met, it will not be without interest to say a few words about the actual building operations.

The site contains about three-quarters of an acre, and is surrounded by buildings. On it was a large and important branch of the Bank itself in full work. This had to be preserved until the staff could be transferred to the new building, which, accordingly, had to be erected in sections. Not only was this the case, but two sets of premises, one at each end of the Poultry front, were let on leases which had still some years to run, and which it was inexpedient or impossible to determine. That accounts for the present truncated appearance of the Poultry façade. Messrs. Holland & Hannen and Cubitts were appointed as building managers. They prepared a time-table carefully worked out so that there was no interval between the work of the various trades. As soon as one trade finished it was immediately followed by the next. They were not to do any of the work themselves unless it were to fill the place of some sub-contractor who was behind time. Obviously this entailed elaborate organisation, and it has worked on the whole successfully, with the result that progress has been astonishingly rapid.

The site occupied by the first section had to be cleared, and the basement excavated to a general depth of over 40 feet, and in parts to 60 feet. This excavation had to be converted into a huge water-tight tank, of which the floor was a reinforced concrete raft, to carry the building, and the sides were concrete retaining walls. The concrete was itself water-tight, but, owing to old buildings having to be preserved and shored up, a good deal of temporary work had to be installed, and the water which thereby found its way in had to be pumped out. The existing Bank, for instance, had to be supported while part of the permanent new structure was erected under it, for a distance back of 10 feet in parts. Thanks to the skill of the consulting engineers, Messrs. Sir Douglas Fox and Partners, all this work was done without disaster or even accident. But beneath part of the site meandered the subterranean Wall brook, and you cannot plump down a huge water-tight tank into the bed of a stream without something happening

What exactly did happen, and how it happened, it was impossible to diagnose accurately, but whether from the diversion of the stream, or the necessary pumping operations, but certainly not from the giving way of the earth, complaints of cracks appearing in adjacent buildings began to come in. These, of course, had to be investigated and settled. Other complaints of later date had to be tactfully handled, for it is impossible to say definitely whether or not building operations that have been carried on for a year or two are responsible for new cracks in buildings some distance away. Incessant watch had to be kept on all the adjoining buildings, and anything requiring attention had to be dealt with at once. It became desirable at one stage to lighten the load of the old, existing buildings at one end of the Poultry, by taking down the three upper stories, but as the building belonged to the Bank and the upper floors were occupied by them the difficulties were minimised.

Gradually the building emerged from the ground and soared upwards until the sixth floor and the dome over it were complete, and then a quick change-over of the staff during a week-end had to be accomplished—an operation that entailed considerable organisation.

In the meantime, of course, there arose the question of ancient lights. But I should like to say that in all these negotiations, whether in respect of damage to buildings or ancient lights, we have been met on the whole in a sympathetic spirit, and whatever may have been the intermediate disagreements, they have all been settled amicably.

Time does not permit of any dwelling upon decorative details. You have seen a photograph of the Poultry façade taken from the model—a very faithful representation. The Princes Street façade will match it. With regard to the internal work the building is so incomplete that no photographs would do it justice ; but if anyone should

MIDLAND BANK HEAD OFFICE
Model of completed Poultry façade

happen to visit it, he will find in the marble staircase on the ground floor, and in the corridor on the fifth floor, a promise of what may be expected when the building is finished. One other point is worth mentioning. The stancheons of the Banking Hall are cased in a very beautiful marble called Verdite, a rare material found only in one small district in South Africa. It is obtainable only in small blocks and has to be pieced together to form the large columns on which it is used. So rare is it that the marble contractor, after exhausting the contents of one hill, had to purchase the whole of another small mountain in order to obtain the exclusive rights of quarrying.

I feel that I have treated the subject rather sketchily, but I hope that I have indicated some of the far-reaching complications that attend the erection of a large building in the City of London.

## Discussion

THE PRESIDENT, MR. WALTER TAPPER, A.R.A., IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. ARTHUR J. DAVIS [*F.*], in proposing the vote of thanks said :

This subject of banks is very much to the fore at the present moment. We have seen the Midland Bank going up ; Lloyds Bank is also building headquarters, and so is the Westminster Bank in Lothbury. We have seen in the provinces numerous and very delightful examples of modern architecture, and I think that all architects may at some time or other in their career have a bank to build, so that this paper is of exceptional interest to all of us.

Mr. Gotch has not mentioned anything about foreign banks. I want to say something about them because their method of banking is different from ours. I think it was this country which first brought in the system of payment by cheques ; and the result is that much financial business is done outside the bank, and only at rush hours is the great banking hall crowded. In France, Belgium, and Germany, where this system of payment by cheque is not so prevalent, the public space required is very much greater. A larger number of people enter banks there to do business than in this country, and the result is that the planning is entirely different. The major portion of the ground floor, which in England is occupied by the clerks is, abroad, taken up with space for the public, and they have a sort of safe-deposit room in the basement, where you see elderly gentlemen and ladies cutting their coupons and enjoying a quiet afternoon looking after their wealth. You do not see much of that in this country, but it is curiously prevalent abroad. And in regard to that, it seems to me that most people, when they enter a bank, seem to change their character and to become suspicious of each other ; they seem to think that someone is trying to " get at them." I was interested to hear of all the precautions which are taken to ensure a noiseless working place ; because at the beginning when my firm was designing the Westminster Bank, we thought the great thing would be to avoid noise, and suggested that in the public space rubber flooring would answer the purpose. But, to my amazement, this suggestion was turned aside, and marble was voted for instead, because it was said rubber would be too noiseless. I asked for an explanation, and was told that many people writing out cheques and signing their names objected to someone " creeping up behind them and looking over their shoulder ! "

The question of the foundations interested me very much. At the Westminster Bank we are faced with the same problems as they were at the Midland. We are on the same river, on the bed of the Wallbrook, which is a muddy bog. Our solution, which, so far, has proved satisfactory, is by sheet piling. You drive your sheets of metal down into the soil, they are interlocked in by water-tight method, and you create what may be called a tank of metal without a bottom. You can then pump without danger of drawing away water from the foundations of your neighbour, and build your retaining walls inside. That is the best method of dealing with the dangers such as we experience in the City.

With regard to the construction of the strong rooms, Mr. Gotch mentioned the word " impregnable." I have been very much interested in the question of strong rooms, and we have had some interesting experiments made with different materials. Apparently there is no strong room which cannot be successfully entered if sufficient time is given to the attack. I think strong-room manufacturers specify their conditions in terms of time : a three-day strong room, or an eight-day strong room, which means that strong rooms would resist any attempts by the most skilful and accomplished bank breakers for a period of eight days and after that they could be forced open.

There is also the question—which has not been mentioned—that strong rooms should be bomb proof as well as fire-proof and burglar proof. We were told it might be desirable to provide some sort of security against enemy aircraft. When I was asked that, I said, " Which bomb do you mean ? the 1914 bomb, or the 1940 bomb ? You could easily protect the strong room from the torpedo which was thrown from aeroplanes in 1914, but no one knows what explosives there will be in the next war." Therefore it was agreed it was no use attempting to secure a bank against those explo-

sives, or any attacks from the air. And the same can be said of the blowpipes which are used by various experts to open doors. Scientific research is advancing so rapidly one does not know what the future will provide.

I think the best kind of strong room wall is a concrete wall in which are layers of ordinary expanding metal. I am told it is almost impossible to get through that. When you make a hole, there are these different pieces of metal looking at you, and you require a gigantic tooth-pick to pick them out; whereas, with the system of bars, as soon as you make a hole between the bars you can insert the explosive to make a sufficiently large opening. But with the other system, something like the one Mr. Gotch showed on the screen, consisting of layers of expanding metal buried in fine concrete, wherever you make a hole you would be faced with small portions of metal.

Mr. FREDERICK HYDE (Managing Director, Midland Bank): This generation, I think, owes a great debt of gratitude to bygone ages for the many beautiful and stately buildings which already grace the country, and the directors of the Midland Bank felt, when the need for building a new head office occurred, that here was afforded an opportunity of repaying, in some measure, the debt due to their predecessors. It seemed to them that while they could arrange for a building that would accommodate the very large organization that was necessary, there was also an opportunity of doing something to add to the beauty of the great City of London. They hoped that the result would prove a lasting testimony to the artistic skill and engineering ability of the architects of the twentieth century. I think that their hopes have been fulfilled, looking at the building even in its present very incomplete form. As Mr. Gotch pointed out, a great deal of the work in a bank is very much in the nature of work that is carried out in a factory; and, therefore, while it is desirable that the building as a whole should be made as suggestive of strength and security as is possible, yet the first consideration is light and air. These attributes have been thoroughly observed by the architects.

Mr. Laurence Gotch has been living on the site, and has had to meet the many difficulties and trials that have arisen in association with the erection of a huge building in the heart of London. He has met those difficulties with a great deal of courage, a great deal of tact, and a great deal of skill. Surely it is no mean achievement to have introduced beneath the room in which the banking was actually being carried on those heavy reinforcements which were shown on the screen; while the steel construction was carried on not only behind, but around, through and above the building. This was done without interfering, or only to a minimum extent, with the business of the bank.

Mr. L. M. GOTCH [*F.*]: With regard to the comment Mr. Hyde made about the Princes Street building, a good deal of the success of that part is due to the skill of the resident engineer, Mr. Snow. He has ingeniously managed to create strong rooms underneath the bank night by night, and put in reinforced spiral work while the bank clerks were asleep, and next morning they have worked on a polished floor without knowing what has been done beneath them.

Our association with Sir Edwin Lutyens in this work has been to me personally a valuable education in the fine points of design, and Mr. Thomas's experience and advice have been most helpful.

Mr. Davis raised one or two points. One was the question of safe deposits; in the Midland Bank the big door illustrated is the entrance, but a square door is as strong as a circular one. That room will be fitted with renter deposits for 10,000 to 11,000, and in the corridor outside there will be inspection boxes to which clients can go and pore over their belongings, jewels, etc.; and probably also some of the rooms will be big enough for directors' meetings to be held.

With regard to bomb-proof rooms, I agree we do not know what will happen in thirty years' time; but here the strong room is not on the top, but has two strong floors above it, and I think it will take a fair bomb to get through two floors of 3 ft. 6 in. heavily reinforced concrete, even in 1940. It may be possible but it would have to be a big one.

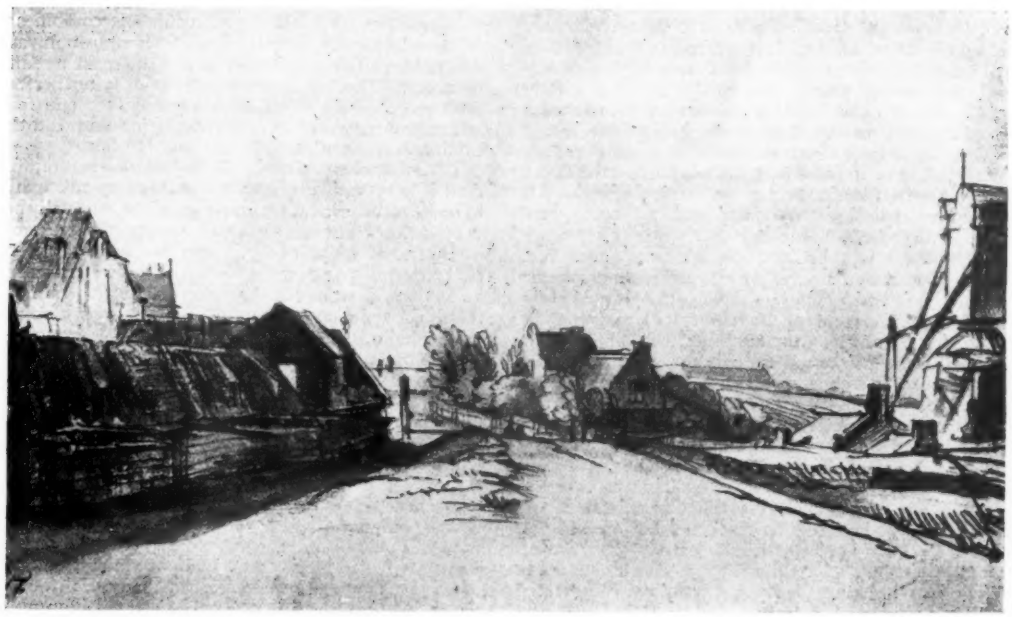
On the question of sound, I pay a strong tribute to the cabot quilting. It is a comparatively new material, and is rapidly finding its way to the front, and it has been most effective. We have been able to reduce the reverberation of the sound waves by several seconds by the aid of this material. In the board room, behind the tapestry the walls are lined with cabot quilting. Rubber floor for the banking hall has been decided on, despite the possibility of people creeping up behind customers. There seems in this bank a sufficient spirit of trust!

Mr. ALFRED GOTCH (in reply): With regard to people creeping up behind customers, there is no doubt that, especially in country districts, some customers are extremely jealous of being approached, and a bank manager has told me that some of his customers stay outside until they see that the man they know has gone in and come out again. Another curious thing is, that in remote districts there is still great reluctance on the part of the country people, farmers and so on, to deposit their money in any hands other than their own. When farmers come into market, they like to take their money home with them.

It must be only a matter of time to get into any strong room, but the point is, as Mr. Davis emphasised, that all these strong rooms now are so constructed that they are safe for the time during which the bank is likely to be left unoccupied.

# Dutch Art in London

BY MAJOR H. C. CORLETTE, O.B.E., F.S.A. [*F.*].



REMBRANDT VAN RIJN: ON THE FORTIFICATIONS OF AMSTERDAM, NEAR THE RAAMPOORT

THE Exhibition of Dutch Art at the Royal Academy, looked at as a whole, is like reading another, and later, volume hitherto unpublished, by Motley on the history of the Netherlands, the rise of a Dutch Kingdom, or Republic, in the arts. It is now to be closed, and this particular book will be out of print. But it will leave a lasting impression on the many thousands who have examined its illustrations with so much delight. For this pleasure we thank our friends in Holland especially, and all others who have contributed so generously to the making of such a wonderful assembly of fine skill.

In it we have been able to meet with and to enjoy the company of every type of personality that made history during a period of rapid change in every sphere of thought and life. Some of that history, so far as it was recorded by the arts of the time, has been lost. For much of the work produced before the seventeenth century has disappeared, except in architecture. This at least is so if we are to judge by the few works in one small gallery which carry us back to the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. And these works are, perhaps necessarily, a representation of the painters' craftsmanship only. A few, and it is only a few, of these are decorative in the sense that they were produced as an integral part of some architectural scheme, definitely related to the building in which they found their essential place. Nearly all the works of a later date are pictorial in character, portraits, landscapes, domestic scenes, incidental additions to the private or public rooms in which they were to be seen. They are not parts of the design of the interiors of buildings. Painters were already making their work movable in frames. And it was to become removable many times over in a later century when picture collections, and galleries on a large scale, were to be a fashion. The more intimate and, as I think, true value of the painter's craft, as a great educating influence, was somewhat diminished by this change, but certainly not lost. It is obviously necessary to live with some few at least of the best examples of fine craft skill if it is to be able to exercise a corrective, and a civilising, influence in the atmosphere we are to breathe. Perhaps this may be accepted as one of the leading facts expressed by the exhibits themselves. For each one of them is a page of

one great volume, the persistent theme of which is a stern denial of the utilitarian, materialistic, and merely commercialised view of life. That theme is stated, too, in no dead negative form. It is seen in actual fact as a positive declaration by a whole nation, by the entire Dutch people. And by a population, too, that was certainly one of the keenest, most enterprising, in Europe. They did not " encourage " the arts, as it is so often tamely expressed in terms of a more modern sentiment. But they did use them. If they required practical things they insisted on having them well made and beautifully designed. Very many of the frames for the pictures in this collection prove this, for they are a study in themselves. And by this their practical value was not lessened, but increased. For it called into active exercise the finest skill available in the making of any usable thing. All these pictures, paintings, portraits were national, personal, or local records of the day and time. They were history. Not dry text books of prosaic facts only. But they were permanent studies of the essential character of a whole community, expressed with the utmost subtlety of imaginative and poetic ability. Every artisan revealed some part of his dramatic insight in all the work he did. All these painters were painters, men skilled in their craft. And it was as masters of a brush craft they were known and well regarded rather than under the more modern and generic term " artists."

There is no end to the wealth of suggestion in this collection, no end to the lines of investigation which might be pursued that are visible on every inch of the wall spaces. Among the drawings are many finely-finished things, others are sketches, rapid studies and impressions that are inimitable. There are several which show how well architecture was understood and drawn. For it cannot be drawn except with some real understanding of what it is and the structural meaning in the detail of its forms as well as the function of its larger sculptural masses. The value of the simpler elements to be observed in the variety of harmonised planes and outlines has seldom been better caught and held than in the little village scene by Rembrandt " On the Fortifications of Amsterdam." As a drawing it is a very brilliant thing, that seems to have been made without premeditated composition, quickly, deftly, noted down having not one single stroke or wash without a reason for its position.

The etchings represent the work of Seghers and Rembrandt only. It would have been interesting to see those of some other men, if only a few. Among those by Seghers are shown some early examples of etchings printed in colours.

All the impressions from Rembrandt's plates show us interesting differences of method and all are of fine character. But it is in the dry-point examples, rather than the bitten ones perhaps, that the more subtle technical qualities are to be seen. Some are hung rather high on the walls to allow a close examination of them. There is probably little doubt that the most remarkable thing ever produced by a needle point and printed from a copper plate is the portrait of Jan Six reading by an open window. Of this one thing much might be said by way of a critical appreciation of method and achievement on so small a scale in a piece of work that is one of the greatest of its kind ever done, even by Rembrandt. It is full of expressive detail in every part of it. Every fraction of the plate has been worked upon, and all is done by the most sensitive touches of a needle point multiplied a thousand times over. But yet the final result is large in feeling, big in its scale, deep in its tones, broad, and apparently so simple, in its final, single, result. It combines many things of interest separately in its composition, and yet it is not an affair of patches, built up to make a semblance of unity. The central fact of it is a living personality. And the central fact of him is in his face and features, where you may read as clearly as Rembrandt did the fine mind and spirit of himself, the man Jan Six.

I have spoken of these Dutch painters as craftsmen. And it is of their craft we are enabled by this exhibition to make some critical examination, more especially because very little of any other is to be seen. There are some examples of quite exceptionally beautiful work by the silversmiths. And there is a small but representative collection of the glass worker's ability. Some of it moulded, some cut, and most of it engraved. Something of the history of the development of this craft is to be read in the nature of the design, something in the character of the workmanship, and also in the colour and brilliance of the material itself. By speaking of colour in old white glass I refer to those delicate, but perceptibly different, qualities of colour in old clear transparent white glass. You see this particular colouring, as well as the bright diamond-like flash of light, in the old crown glass that was used for domestic or Church window glazing, in leaded lights or larger panes. Flint glass, compared with it, is dead and dull, too clear, too transparent, too evenly rolled and flat. It is without variety, or accidents of colour, and so lacks interest as a material for its own sake apart from the way it may be used. Light and shade reflected in the old glass is quite different in effective character in comparison with the more modern material. It is only necessary to place some pieces of Waterford on the same shelf with other glass, moulded or cut, of the same period, to make sure of this cloudy but transparent colour quality in the clear glass of that time. But the differences in character between glasses of one period and another are felt by the touch as well as seen by eye. This is particularly so with cut glass. I have referred to the historic value of good craftsmanship. It is evident in glass as in other materials. Some of the Dutch glass, to speak only of that type among the exhibits, indicates this value. The Dutch baluster stems are characteristic in this way. And the engraved work on the bowls of some pieces is an additional interest in this historic sense. One piece, for instance, is engraved with a portrait of William the Third, Prince of Orange.

When we turn to the silver a marked difference between it and much modern silver is apparent. Differences in design and general character are obvious. For in the differences in form as well as in the handling of the material a Dutch feeling is to be seen that is distinct from any English work of about the same time. One pair of candlesticks for example, is quite distinctively Dutch in form. But in the detail of the embossed foliage, especially of the large base, there is a character developed

much in the same manner as some examples of English work of the seventeenth century. It may be that we owe this type of work to the influence of the Netherlands on our English silversmiths. This old silver, too, has a colour quality that is not to be seen in much of the later work. It is harder in its surfaces. Very malleable as the silver clearly is, it has been hammered more in preparing and in finally shaping it. Modern silver is too light, too white. It lacks that silver grey character that we expect to find in early examples of the craft. And though the deft touch of the tooling is always an integral part of the beauty of the old silversmith's design, it is never an artificially imparted or consciously added character. It was developed of itself in the making of the vessel; and there is no self-conscious, mechanical, or school of art emphasis in it. In fact it is what the craftsman apprentice learnt to do under the age-long traditions carried on through generations of workshop experience.

From the historic point of view I will speak of some exhibits quite briefly. There is the silver-gilt cup and cover lent by Lord Yarborough, and the large hexagonal rose-water basin and ewer lent by the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Both these show in their design that the Dutch are a people of the sea like ourselves. The whole scheme of their design is of the sea. The latter was made by Lutma about the middle of the seventeenth century. And in the centre of the basin are the arms of Admiral Cornelis Van Tromp, who visited England as the guest of Charles II. The cup and cover are late sixteenth-century work and carry us back in mind to the time of William of Orange. They commemorate his defeat of Philip II and his successful defiance of Alva, the Spanish butcher. The rose-water basin and ewer find an echo as part of another exhibit in the collection. And this fact suggests that there is much that one craft owes to another. I refer at present to the painting by Ter Borch, called "The Letter," lent by His Majesty the King. It is certainly one of the finest things in the whole exhibition. But what would it be without the colour, texture, design, and weaving of the dress fabrics, the table cloth, and the cover of the stool on which the small dog sleeps; without the design of the furniture and fittings of the room, and the room itself; without the fine brass chandelier hanging from the ceiling; or the rose-water dish and ewer which a page is placing upon the table?

This dish and ewer are those by Lutma, shown elsewhere among the exhibits of silversmiths' work in the same collection. It is true that in the picture they are silver gilt. But that is merely an incidental part of the general colour scheme required by the painter. Another and similar note of colour is brought into the composition by the brass of the chandelier. So, then, we see the painter, like any architect, necessarily relying on several other crafts for the right success of what he has to do. To say this does not in any sense belittle his great achievement. But it does show that the real success of one craft, call it art if you will, cannot be secured without a high level of ability, equal in its degree, contributed by all. There is not a painting in the whole collection that does not repeat, and it is repeated everywhere, this same essential principle. That principle is that all the crafts, all the arts are related one to another, and that it is architecture, the parent of them all, that fosters that

JOHANNES VERMEER: A VIEW OF DELFT FROM THE ROTTERDAM CANAL

intimate relationship, brings them all together as one family and gives, or should give, them a harmony in this confederacy of skill. In architecture truly developed, clearly understood, well conceived and finely finished, this alliance is necessary, and it is made possible. It provides for an essential co-ordinating influence and, perhaps, at times, authority, so that all may act together for the realisation of some one great conception. But it must be done, can be done, and is being done, leaving freedom for development among all the allies. That it has been done and done admirably in the past is proved by this exhibition and by the history of every great period in the arts to which we may look for confirmation and guidance, in aim, method or procedure.

The etching by Rembrandt of Lutma, the goldsmith silversmith, and sculptor, shows that he, too, owes something to him for aid, for in this etching is represented a small oval dish which is exhibited among the silver pieces of the collection. So I think that this relationship, this interdependence, in the arts being already proved, not by me, but by evidence, we may congratulate all those who in the past thirty years of English effort, have tried to realise it again, on the slow but surely growing success of their aim. And that aim is before us in the organised effort of many who are actively working for its realisation. The Dutch schools of craftsmen required no seemingly artificial aids seeking to bring back lost qualities in the arts. Their organised effort was part of the social fabric of the day. And it was to be seen at work in the apprentice and workshop custom, in the guild system, with its charters, and in the general and special interest intelligently taken by the whole community in the works of their own craftsmen. Our problem, and no doubt theirs, too, to-day, is to recreate this intelligent, and intelligible, interest in the properly sound, and beautiful, making of necessary things. But also to insist that things commercial, things manufactured, that are not " manu " but " machini "-factured shall be equally well considered and well done. That was one of the objects for which our own British Institute of Industrial Art and the Design and Industries Association was founded.

Perhaps a few may say these observations are irrelevant in a note on such an exhibition as our Dutch and other friends have made possible. But why should we not try to learn something, in a general way, of what this great collection is clear evidence, as well as enjoy the particular things exhibited ? These things were produced under certain conditions to which we cannot return. We do not ask to be translated back into the conditions of, say, the seventeenth or any other century. Our business is with the present and what we and it can do for the future now. We want fine things like these to be made again. We desire, some of us, if we can, to possess either old fine things or new ones. We need them, either the one or the other. They are necessaries, not luxuries, for we cannot have fruit without the flowers. That the arts as a factor in civilisation have been treated somewhat as a neglected Cinderella is more or less admitted, perhaps, in the Interim Report recently issued by the Royal Commission on Museums and Galleries. And for some awakening to the loss caused by that neglect we owe much to the promoters of this exhibition. For without the energetic pursuit of the quest for things of real merit, ancient or modern, by the National Art Collections Fund we should have lost many things they have taught us to regard as national treasures.

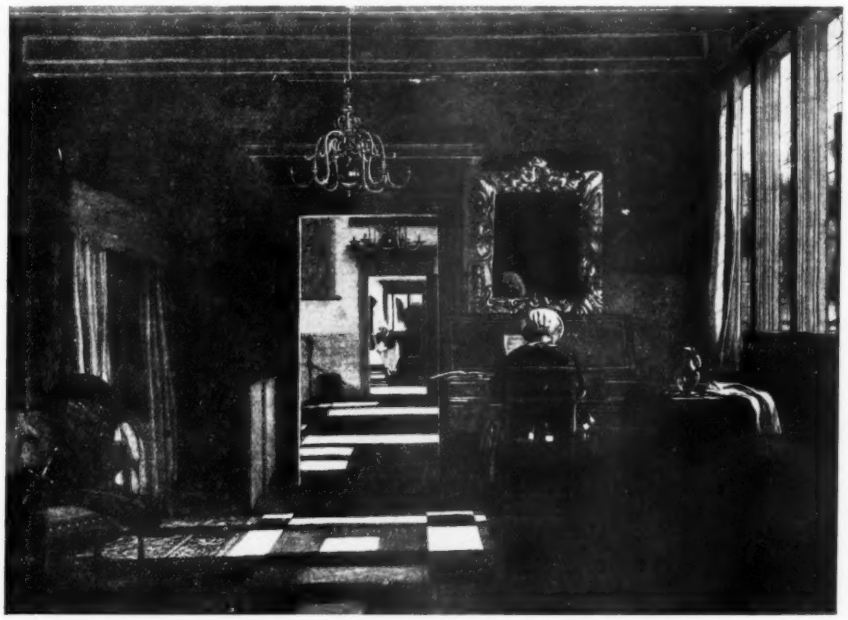
Let me turn now to the work of the painters. They really are the makers of this exhibition. For that we thank them much. And their personality lives still vitally on and in their many panels and canvases. Their work has so great an appeal to all that appreciation, rather than criticism, of it may not be amiss. That it has this direct personal appeal is indicated quite definitely by the many thousands of visitors to this exhibition who at times have made a close inspection really impossible. And the appeal has been to all in any grade of life. The first simple element of this wide appeal is colour, next it is the subject, then drawing, and afterwards design, or composition, and the theme these are made to unravel and reveal. By far the most numerous are the portrait subjects, studies of character, of personality. Many more show us incidents of domestic or town and seafaring life in some aspect. Others record scenes of cities, towns and villages, with their cottages, churches, or larger buildings, and the canals and rivers with their bridges. Several are large landscapes with a wide view of the special and very characteristic scenery of Holland. These show how the vigour of the Dutch character has grappled with the difficulties of their surroundings and the grip with which they have impressed their own character on their native land. It remains still Dutch. And thinking or feeling this to be so, we may be permitted to wonder how long the English countryside will remain really English unless we take some radical steps to preserve it from the prevailing vile assaults upon its peculiar beauty. Of definite colour in the decorative sense we find most indication in the earlier works. It is more distinctly allied to architectural conceptions, because it took its place in some building as part of a larger scheme where its decorative quality was required and where its theme could be read and understood. Of such works there are comparatively few like the two of the Adoration of the Magi by Geertgen ; the Triptych by the Master from Delft ; and three others by Lucas Van Leyden from Hampton Court lent by His Majesty the King. Other and later works are decorative, but in what may be called a pictorial and more limited, or restricted, sense. Of these there are the several remarkable and very beautiful examples of the work of Ter Borch Metsu, Jan Steen, Nicolas Maes, Pieter de Hooch, Cuyp, and Vermeer among many others. Perhaps those by Metsu, Ter Borch and Vermeer have proved themselves to be some of the most attractive things of their kind we have ever seen.

Of views in which an architectural character predominates there are those of " Amsterdam " by Jan van der Heyden, a " View of Delft " and others by Vermeer. And there is the " Woman at the Harpsichord " by Emanuel de Witte which, apart from other qualities, gives a fine impression of the interior of a Dutch dwelling of some architectural character. There are many showing interiors or exteriors of large buildings with their several kinds of decorative furniture or fittings. The exterior of " The Church of St. Mary, Utrecht," by Pieter Saenredam, is a very admirable and simply handled painting

of a large architectural scheme in which the broad masses and planes of the buildings and the particular features are well expressed without emphasising unnecessarily the different textures of the wall surfaces.

The very large number of portraits that have been brought together enable us to see the different types of the men and women who were the makers of Holland and the assistant builders of the Dutch tradition in the arts. They provided the opportunities of which Scorel, Frans Hals, Verspronck, and Rembrandt made such good use. But it is the work of the latter that easily leads all others in the domain of portraiture. He does the same among the drawings. And there is nothing of its kind at all comparable with "The Adoration of the Magi," from Buckingham Palace, or "The Bridge," lent by the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. It is, however, in the large series of portraits that we can trace best the many varieties of power that he developed by technical skill and mental insight. And in this series we find examples of every period of his work from about the year 1630 onwards. His method varies largely with each different subject. And within the limits of any one example there is often to be seen much variety in his technique. This variety is called into being by the age and character of subject; the smooth or rough skin; the rough or delicate features; or the nature and surface texture of the materials that are to be represented by pigment.

He was always building on his own experiences, developing by every experimental device he liked to try, and proving, for himself, what different handlings with the brush would produce either on panel or on fine or coarse canvas textures. I do not know myself of any work by him painted on a metal surface like copper. Some of the Italians used such a ground at times, and its influence on method or finish is noticeable. But he worked on mahogany, as Watteau did later, and frequently on oak. And this ground was in a measure responsible for some resulting change as with the canvases. In the present exhibition there is little evidence of his use of what, for convenience, may be called definite colour, such as blue, red, or green, except in a very subdued or subordinate way. But that he did so use colour at times is evident from well-known examples, especially several that were at The Hermitage, in Petrograd. Perhaps the Flora, a portrait of Saskia, lent by the Duke of Buccleuch, is the best instance of the application of colour among his pictures in the present collection. It should be compared with the other Flora at the Hermitage. The latter has the most colour of these two, which are evidently companion pictures.



EMANUEL DE WITTE: BEDROOM, WITH A WOMAN AT THE HARPSICHORD

We may ask why did Rembrandt paint these two Floras—the Buccleuch one in 1633 and the Hermitage one in 1634. No doubt for various reasons. But among them these are evident: They are of different persons of different ages, with different characters and a different scale of feature in each face. The Hermitage Flora is the younger and prettier of the two, and has the smaller head and features. This difference is most marked in the personality, that fine essence or *esprit*, that is never

the same in any two human beings. The Buccleuch Saskia of 1633 is the same person as the Saskia als Mädchen, also of 1633, in the Dresden Gallery. The scale of the head, and of the features, is similar in these two, and also the age ; but the actual momentary expression of the face differs in each. These two Floras are a pair, a comparison, a contrast ; in pose, in person, in composition ; and, also, largely in their colour and technical details. If the Buccleuch portrait is of Saskia that at the Hermitage is, I think, her younger and prettier cousin, the wife of Jan Sylvius. Of Sylvius himself Rembrandt did a portrait in 1633. The Dresden Saskia is also a companion picture, in another way, to the Buccleuch Flora. Both are of the same subject, and both of them were painted during the same year 1633. They are not comparable as likenesses, but as personalities. For by the matter of mere likeness or unlikeness Rembrandt was not too much restrained. If this is so, it would be interesting to discover if there is also another portrait, a similar companion picture to the Hermitage Flora of 1634 ; the younger, prettier cousin with the more sensitive and smaller features. There is, I am convinced, some evidence of the existence of such a work, also painted in 1634.

This comparison, however, raises an interesting question again as to the correctness or otherwise of the date 1633 given by Rembrandt on the silver-point drawing in Berlin of Saskia as his wife. Some experts say this date is wrong. And if both these Floras are of Saskia, which I doubt, the one of 1633, the other 1634, they themselves, quite obviously, invite further enquiry. My own view, from the evidence of the portraits, is that the earlier may be Saskia, and the later her cousin.

The Buccleuch Flora is probably as good an illustration as any other of the marked differences of technique to be seen within the limited area of one picture. It is on panel, not canvas, presumably oak. The face is painted in the rather tight, smooth method to be seen in so much of the earlier work. By some it has been suggested that this is a reflex derived from Italian influences. And it cannot be denied that such influences had permeated the arts of all Europe at the time the work was done. We see it operating in the architecture of the Netherlands of that day, and also in the furniture and fittings, carving and colour decoration, and among the silversmiths at their craft. That Rembrandt had studied the Italians cannot be doubted. But none was less Latinised than he in the general character of his outlook and method. In fact, it may be that this refusal to become Italianised had some effect on his later career and especially on the comparative neglect of his works for a time during the following century. The history of the Rubens family indicates my meaning. Banishment of the father for ecclesiastical opinions, and his son's return later to Flemish soil. His tutelage in Italy. His diplomatic employments in France, then in Spain, and later in England, where he conducted political negotiations with Gerbier, who was also a Fleming.

There was, in fact, one vast system in Europe operated from Italy that affected education in all its various phases at this time. And its influences were direct in the arts as well as in other ways. This, however, is a digression. But it suggests enquiry, and shows that if we would try more fully to understand Dutch art, such an enquiry needs pursuit.

This smooth painting and tight handling to which I have referred is to be seen in several other works in the collection, notably in the fine portrait on canvas of the wife of Johannes Elison, dated 1634, lent by Eugene Schneider. The same careful finish is found in the Pellicorne portraits in the Wallace Collection. But the other interesting point about this Buccleuch Flora is that within the four borders of the same work there is to be found that much freer and more vigorous laying on of the paint from a full brush, to be seen more frequently in the later works, but also as well in others of an early date. Much more might be said in an attempt to appreciate the several indications of the wide range and variety of Rembrandt's peculiar skill. His treatment of light within the depths of broad shadows ; the variations in the actual colouring of those shadows ; the handling of receding planes in the modelling of form ; these are all interesting. But he possessed a peculiar and distinctive ability to represent what may be called an atmospheric distance and depth from the foreground plane of a picture right back into the deep recesses of a background. In fact, it may perhaps be said that many of these backgrounds, in his hands, are not grounds or surfaces at all, but something like a horizon, all distances and great depths.

As a master painter, Rembrandt, like others, had his pupils, assistants of the workshop or studio, and his imitators, like Dietrich or Grimon. But it is a little difficult to understand how any painting by these by Bol or by Flinck, can be mistaken for one by Rembrandt The palette is different, so also is the pigment and the use of the brush, the modelling, and particularly the atmosphere that envelopes the whole execution. No others discovered that peculiar way in which the special and personal esprit of the subject is secured by Rembrandt.

I do not know of any work by him that could be called decorative painting in an architectural sense. But as an etcher, and as a painter's painter he stands apart by himself, and quite alone.

After all this, what is to be said in conclusion ? What do these things say to us ? How do we stand in relation to them in the arts of to-day ? Comparisons are difficult. And in some directions many moderns cannot compete or bear exposure in the same room with this old work. Least of all can we think of those crude things that preach their very real modernism by emphasis on the ism, and not on anything else, not on real ability, except an ability to pose, and impose on the ignorance or gullibility of some simple folk. Sound, hard work, reasonable and reasoned development, linked to, but not hindered by, the full experience of tradition, this is a way to find, by further experiment, new methods, and to express new ideas.

It will be sufficient to say that those who would encourage the arts should encourage where they justly can the men who work in them, live by them. They can imitate the well-proved methods by which the Dutch school of seventeenth century was brought into being That method was quite a simple one. It was not a lofty " patronage," but a ready purse, public as well as private, in constant use. It was not by talk of that

wretched modern term, "lovers of art," but by the practical action of those who knew that the aim and end of real affection was to acquire, possess, retain ; and live with and for those things, and persons, too, which they valued most in life. The Dutch fought most vigorously for their personal, civil and ecclesiastical liberties ; they fought their way then by present enterprise to future achievement ; and they also fought by practical endeavour in the realities of actual work to produce some real beauty in all the necessary things of which they made good use. And modern England, by the same method, could do the same for the development of all English modern arts, and leave for our posterity a legacy of delight like that we have been privileged lately to enjoy.

# Reviews

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL. HOUSING. 8*o*. 1928. [*P. S. King and Son, Ltd.*] (*No.* 2,544.) 2s. 6d.

This excellent publication is the third of the series of reports dealing officially with the London County Council's housing work ; the first was issued in 1900, the second in 1913 and the new volume brings the record up to the end of 1927. It has been prepared under the supervision of the Clerk to the Council and is a fine record of achievement and investigation, well illustrated with good photographs and with reproductions of the County Architect's plans.

Judged from almost any point of view, the housing activities of the L.C.C. since the conclusion of the war have been remarkable. The problems to be tackled were on a vast scale ; the difficulties encountered were great, but both in regard to quantity and quality the results here chronicled are those in which any authority could take justifiable pride. The culmination of the rate of production was reached in the year ended March, 1928, during which 10,000 houses and flats were erected by the agency of the Council. This is in striking comparison with the number of dwellings erected under the same auspices in the twenty pre-war years, also 10,000. Since 1919 the total number of houses erected has been 22,609, up to the beginning of 1928.

To an architect, however, it is the qualitative side of these achievements which appeals most. From the inset map in this volume it will be seen that the large housing estates are spread over a wide area and the policy pursued has been a wise one in relation to acquisition of suitable land in open surroundings. The large estates—Becontree in Essex, St. Helier in Surrey, Watling and White Hart Lane in Middlesex—are outside the L.C.C. boundaries and the others are mainly situated just within. Much has been said about Becontree and its problems, particularly in regard to transport facilities and, doubtless with a view to dealing with some of the criticisms made, several pages of the book are given up to descriptions of Becontree. The Council's original intentions as to its development have had to be modified owing to changing conditions, but when all has been said and done, the bold conception and the scale of the operations already carried out demonstrate that Becontree has been one of the greatest enterprises in housing which a local authority has undertaken.

Mr. Topham Forrest's lay-out plans are a study in themselves and are to be admired as regards breadth and interest of treatment. They incorporate, especially the later ones, the most satisfactory features of modern town planning. On each estate ample provision for open space is made ; the roads are well laid out and the grouping of buildings is handled with the skill which we are accustomed to associate with the L.C.C. Architects' Department. Comparisons between pre-war and post-war estate planning at White Hart Lane and Old Oak are very significant, as showing the development in lay-out and grouping which has taken place in recent years.

The good standard in design which has been set up by the L.C.C. is well exemplified in these views of houses on the various estates ; even during the years of after-war stress this standard was maintained.

Mr. Topham Forrest's recent designs for tenement blocks are among the best we have seen in this country ; the elevations of his cottages are as far removed as possible from the "Council houses" of commerce.

Regarding the plans of the houses, the report frankly states that, owing to the difficulties of the time, certain amenities included in the earlier schemes have had to be discarded in order to build the houses at an economic cost. One feature which has had to go is the provision of secondary access, by means of centre passage-ways in the inner houses of blocks or by back paths. Although the plans of these inner houses have been revised to avoid having to carry coal and dustbins through living rooms or sculleries to the front door, the use of the latter for all purposes is objectionable and we hope it is not the Council's last word on the matter. Entrance halls and sculleries have been cut down to 5 feet 9 inches wide, which is too narrow for stairs and for working space. The lack of recessed back porches is also regrettable—a relatively inexpensive amenity of this kind is worth providing and much appreciated by tenants. All the cottage plans illustrated are of the same general type and aspects are not indicated. The non-parlour type with living room on front is unsuitable for a north aspect and one hopes the "through" room plan is sometimes used, though not illustrated.

The plans of flats and tenement dwellings are well worked out and it is evident that much care is exercised in designing this type of building. The illustrations of East Hill, Hornsey Rise and Wapping flats are full of architectural interest and the model of the latest blocks on the Ossulton estate indicates buildings of monumental proportions and modern construction. Whatever views we may have as to the desirability of such edifices as a

solution of the housing problem in London, there can be but few who would deny the success of their architectural treatment in these cases.

This book, well produced and bound in cloth, is published at such a low price that we hope it may have a large circulation among the ever growing number of those concerned in housing and kindred problems.

T. ALWYN LLOYD. (F.)

## NOTES ON RECENT FOREIGN PERIODICALS.

BY GRAHAME B. TUBBS [*A.*].

No visitor to New York can fail to be struck by the contrast between the great luxury of the fashionable quarters and the appalling squalour of the " down town " section. In the Ghetto, for instance, 1,000,000 people live in one square mile, and the conditions in Harlem, the Negro quarter, are equally bad, and are, moreover, becoming worse, owing to the influx of coloured people from the South, to take the place of the European immigrant of the pre-war period. It seems remarkable that multi-millionaires, who have given so lavishly for research and education, should have neglected slum clearance and re-housing, which are, after all, the most necessary and fundamental of all social reforms. Mr. Rockefeller, Jun., has, however, realised their importance, and it is due to his liberality and foresight that the Dunbar Apartments have been built in the Negro quarter. This scheme, which is described in *Architecture* for January, is by the well-known housing authority, Andrew J. Thomas, and is generously laid out with ample gardens and playgrounds. The accommodation is provided on five floors, in addition to the ground floor, and includes crêches and other conveniences, and the larger apartments have two bathrooms. The cost of the building was about 2s. per cubic foot, and the coloured tenants can buy their apartments by instalments spread over 30 years.

The same issue of this magazine contains among other articles definitions of modernism by well-known architects, a suggestion for a list of books suitable for an architect's working library, and Messrs. Robertson and Yerbury continue their photographic review of contemporary European Architecture.

The majority of the illustrations in *The Architectural Forum* (January) are of Adler and Work's house at Lake Forest, Ill. This is a large house, of the shingled farmhouse type, elaborately fitted internally, and sumptuously decorated. Francklyn Paris, who writes on " Rejuvenescence of Wrought-iron Work " in France, reproduces examples from the forge of Edgar Brandt only, but earlier work done under the influence of *l'Art Nouveau* and by Emil Robert are referred to. The author emphasises the influence of modern tools, such as the acetylene blowpipe, on the design of ironwork; he points out that Brandt has collaborated with architects and sculptors, and that his work, although very free, is more controlled and disciplined than his immediate predecessors.

There is a great deal of useful data about swimming baths in the January *Architectural Record*. The technical information included is about water cleaning and sterilizing, acoustics, heating and ventilation, and sun bathing facilities. There are also some plans and photographs. The Church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, Philadelphia, is represented by many excellent photographs of its fine Byzantine work. The mosaics and details appear to be very good. There are also coloured plates of the floor mosaics of Hellenistic workmanship at Delos, which are among the few extant examples of Greek mosaics.

In the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* for December the 54 new " Period " Rooms in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts are described. Among them are three English examples, including a Baroque Chippendale room from Woodcote Park, Epsom, which is now the R.A.C. Country Club. The erection of complete rooms is certainly an ideal way of displaying furniture and pictures of each period, as visitors to the South Kensington Museum well know; it is the only way in which objects can be displayed in approximately the right atmosphere, and it gets away from the old arrangement, where the objects are merely " exhibits." Mr. Mellon, the Secretary of the Treasury, gave an address on " Developing the Nation's Capital," which is printed in the same number, and which the Editor, in a note, says " is one of the clearest and simplest statements of the history and possibilities of the Washington Plan ever made." Although L'Enfant's Plan has suffered many vicissitudes, and has been more than once in danger of being " swamped," there is now every chance that it will be carried through to completion, and that the City may eventually, in Mr. Coolidge's own words, " worthily express the soul of the nation."

The result of the competition for the completion of the tomb of the Unknown Soldier in front of the portico of the Amphitheatre in Arlington National Cemetery is announced in *Pencil Points* (January), and the winning scheme and several of the unsuccessful ones are given. The selected design consists of a simple sarcophagus, in marble with sculptural panels at each end, set at the head of a broad flight of steps in front of the portico. The approaches are fine and have been carefully studied.

This issue contains an article on " Modern " ornaments in America, in which the author says that " modern " ornament is too often merely the copying of the work of present-day European architects instead of antique detail, as formerly. It is illustrated by reproductions of the better examples of what has recently been done, including the preliminary sketches and the final drawings of the National Radiator building in London by Raymond Hood.

In this number there is an account of an ingenious method of making perspective drawings without the use of vanishing points, which the originator, Mr. E. Freese, calls " Perspective Projection," in which all the points are projected into the picture-plane, both in plan and in side elevation. This method is claimed to be much simpler to learn, and much quicker to use than the old method.

A million dollar " Automotive " building (*i.e.*, an exhibition hall for motor cars) for the Canadian National Exhibition was the subject of a competition for Toronto architects, and the the three prize-winning schemes were reproduced in the *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* (January), which also contains a review, with reproductions of the chief exhibits, at the 50th exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy.

The January 15th issue of *L'Architecture* is devoted

to the apartment building in the Rue Guynemer that M. Roux Spitz designed for himself and two friends. The ground floor is given up to the *Concierge* and to the entrances to the main staircase and lifts, and to the garage (for six cars), which occupies the whole of the back part of this floor. The three apartments above are designed to give the utmost comfort under modern conditions of life in Paris, and are attractively decorated; the servants' bedrooms are grouped together on the seventh and eighth floors. The exterior is in stone, and is extremely plain, and without mouldings. Bar-less metal windows are used, and the feature of the front is a straight sided bay, starting from the second floor.

The new Fish Market by M. Hamelet at Dieppe is the feature of *La Construction Moderne* (3rd February). This is a ferro-concrete structure, whose roof is carried on rather interesting-looking ferro-concrete trusses. The exterior, however, is "decorated" with half-timber work, and the roof is surmounted by a turret of curious and involved design.

The contents of *Wasmuths Monats Hefte für Baukunst* include examples for Swiss Housing Schemes; *Kölnischen Zeitung's* Newspaper Office, and Easton and Robertson's new Horticultural Hall.

Furniture designed by a Viennese architect, Fritz Gross, is the subject of the chief article in *Innen Dekoration* for January. A number of modern pieces are shown, including men's fitted wardrobes, and a secretaire, which has book-shelves and a china cabinet at the back. His work is modern, but with a distinct Chinese flavour. An interesting house in a forest, by Professor Bruno Paul, is also given, which is a fresh blend of tradition and modernity.

The Argentine magazine, *Revista de Arquitectura*, has published a large Domestic Architecture number for January. The most important house illustrated is by Signor Soto Acebal, and is called "Casa en Belgrano," and is a fine house in the Spanish tradition. Most of the others are, unfortunately, excessively "picturesque," something between a Swiss Chalet and a Cheshire Manor House—very hard and, one would think, very out of place in their surroundings.

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# Correspondence

## WATER IN A VAULT.

9, *Northgate, Ipswich,*
4 *March* 1929.

*To the Editor*, JOURNAL, R.I.B.A.,—

DEAR SIR,—I am up against a little problem beyond my previous experience, upon which I should very much appreciate any help your readers can afford me.

A vault was constructed last year in a water-logged soil near a river, of two thicknesses of reinforced concrete, with asphalte in between all round, with iron sealed access covers at one end, and a layer of about 12 inches of earth and turf over the whole. Whilst we have reason to feel satisfied that the vault is perfectly water and airtight, we are, however, now troubled with water accumulating upon the floor, apparently due either to condensation or to the inner thickness of concrete sweating. Should it be due to the latter cause, in time it will cease, but the question of condensation I am not clear upon. Should the vault be kept perfectly airtight as at present, or should it be ventilated? If it is kept airtight I presume in time all the dampness in the concrete will come out and all the moisture in the air inside will condense on the floor, so that if the water is periodically removed no more will accumulate. Is this so? Lastly, I have been thinking that it might be possible to place in the vault some absorbing substance such as one sees in exhibition and museum show cases, to attract and absorb the moisture. Can any of your readers suggest anything suitable, or any other remedy? I shall much appreciate any help on this subject.—Yours faithfully, D. G. MILLETT [*A.*].

# The Preservation of Rural England

## OPENING CEREMONY BY THE RIGHT HON. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, LL.D., M.P.

An exhibition of photographs illustrating the manner in which the countryside is being disfigured and the remedies which may be employed, arranged by the Council for the Preservation of Rural England in the galleries of the Royal Institute of British Architects, was opened by the Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, LL.D., M.P., on Monday, 25 February, 1929, at 4.30 p.m. The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres presided.

In the course of his speech Mr. MacDonald said that if the beauties of England were to be outraged we should indeed lose a very precious inheritance. What we had to do was to use our influence with the Government, with County and local Councils, and, above all, perhaps with our schools and teachers. We had to create what might be called "effective watchfulness," so that there should be no robbers, no raiders, no desecrators. We had to see that powers in existence were used.

Speaking of unsightly advertisements, Mr. MacDonald said he felt that conferences with advertisers would bring improvement there. He wished public opinion were sufficiently well organised to make a note of the offensive advertisements and resolve never in the whole course of their lives to patronise the materials advertised until the evils of ugliness had been removed. The Automobile Association, he was certain, never put up bad signs with the idea that they would spoil anything, and now that they had a camera pistol at their heads he was sure they would make amends.

Referring to houses that did not harmonise with surrounding beauties, the speaker made mention of bungalows and pseudo-palaces. Owing to the tremendous and urgent necessity for building, houses had been rushed up without due consideration of what their effect was going to be, except that they would provide accommodation for hundreds of thousands of people. He did not believe that was enough. No one could accuse him of being careless with regard to shelter; but he did think that when they were making up their minds to provide shelter nothing

could justify the reckless way in which the countryside had been ruined by these operations. What happened was that in a good many cases a person chose a site and built a house which expressed himself and not the site. A man of worshipful mind would bring his home, not as an intruder into its setting, but as an invited friend.

The speaker pleaded for simplicity in design and for harmony. No man or woman who happened to own land in this country could establish upon that ownership a right to use the land in such a way that he or she would destroy the whole of the surrounding country. Their liberty must be confined by the right of the people to have preserved for them the soul of the country as it had been expressed in the beauty of the scenery. Speaking of the problem of beauty as related to roads and the newer transport, Mr. MacDonald gave instances of necessary despoliation by the cutting of roads, and suggested that the planting of trees and wild flowers by the sides of these roads would add to their beauty after a while. It was very necessary to inculcate in the young a love of beauty and a horror of ugliness which despoiled England's quiet beauty. England had not an inheritance of arresting scenery. Our scenery was genial and gentle, the scenery of culture, the scenery of quiet, of happy domesticity, and what was placed on it should be of the same character as itself—gracious, gentle, cultured.

Mr. E. Guy Dawber, P.P.R.I.B.A., in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. MacDonald, suggested that much beauty would be saved if architects were consulted more when building was contemplated. What would materially help in checking the flood of ill-designed cottages would be to use local materials. In Cumberland, a district of slate and stone, it was surely unnecessary to introduce red tiles, or to put on Cotswold cottages roofing of asbestos tiles! He had also wondered why it was necessary in Kentish housing schemes to use slates when Kent abounded in brick and tile works.

The exhibition, which originated in Leicester, has already visited Manchester and Liverpool. It will be taken later to Croydon, Leeds, Birkenhead and Cheltenham.

## THE PRESERVATION OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

A meeting of the Representative Committee of St. Paul's Cathedral was held at the Deanery on 4 March, when the seventh report of the Works Committee was presented by Mr. Basil Mott, chairman of the Works Committee. The report states :—

The cementation of the whole of the eight main piers supporting the dome structure has been finished, from their footings below the crypt floor to the " platform " course considerably above the springing of the main arches. The amount of cement mortar injected indicates that a very important addition has been made to the solidity of these portions of the structure. During the course of this work it has been interesting to note the varying amounts of cement mortar taken by the different piers. The north choir pier, which was affected by the fire of 1699 (according to the original building accounts), has taken more than any of the other piers, whereas the east pier of the north transept, which was partially injected during the experiments carried out by the Commission of Architects and Engineers, together with the piers of the south transept, which were extensively repaired during the years 1914 to 1922, took least. It is also worthy of remark that the two piers adjacent to the north-west bastion, reputed to have been built by Edward Strong, took considerably less than the average.

Concurrently with the cementation of these piers, the reinforcement with non-rusting steel bars has also been completed ; over 250 bars, varying in length from 7 feet to 18 feet, having been used in each pier. These have been so arranged that the ashlar facing and the core have been tied securely together, which should add definitely to the unity and stability of the piers.

The work of repairing the ashlar facing of these piers has made considerable progress. To a certain extent this work has been concentrated on the choir piers, so that the temporary strutting can be removed when the time arrives to begin the re-erection of the organ and its casing.

Progress has also been made with the re-erection of the stalls and galleries adjacent to the choir piers.

Good progress has also been made with the system of bracing between the inner and outer drums from the level of the Whispering Gallery upwards, described in general terms in the previous report, of which not less than three-quarters has already been completed. The system consists of 48 large diagonal ties, distributed round the perimeter of the drum structure, the lower bearing plates of which are embedded in the masonry of the Whispering Gallery, the upper plates resting on the outer drum at peristyle level. These are supplemented by twice the number of smaller horizontal ties, half near the upper and half at the lower level, the system of bracing being completed by reinforced concrete slabs, which take the place of the old lead and timber roof at the peristyle level, and act as struts between the drums.

In order to bed the lower plates of the main diagonal ties, steel tubular scaffolding has been erected under the Whispering Gallery, and the work of opening up the necessary holes in the masonry for the reception of these plates has shown in very many cases the extremely beneficial result of the preliminary injection of the masonry before the main holes were drilled, all cracks being filled, and the constituent portions of the masonry being securely bonded together.

Since the date of the last report another complete series of levelling from the datum point in the Post Office courtyard has been made. As before, there is no change in the relative levels of any parts of the structure. In connection with the plumbing measurements, which are carried out at regular quarterly intervals, it has been decided to instal a new series of suspension points on the outside of the Cathedral on the upper cornice. The systems of linear and theodolite measurements already described in previous reports have also been carried out regularly. The results of none of these measurements call for remark.

The expenditure on the preservation work generally by the Works Committee since the date of the last report is about £32,700, making, with what has been previously expended, a total to date of £154,000.

In view of the present rate of progress it is confidently expected, as anticipated in the last report, that it will be possible to have the whole of the Cathedral available for services in time for the Lambeth Conference in the summer of 1930.

## SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM.

13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.2.

Interesting house, built 1812. Paintings, sculptures, and antiquities.

Open free 10.30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, March, April, May, June, July, August. At other times by cards obtained of the Curator.

# Schools of Architecture

FIFTH SERIES

## II.—School of Architecture, University of Sheffield

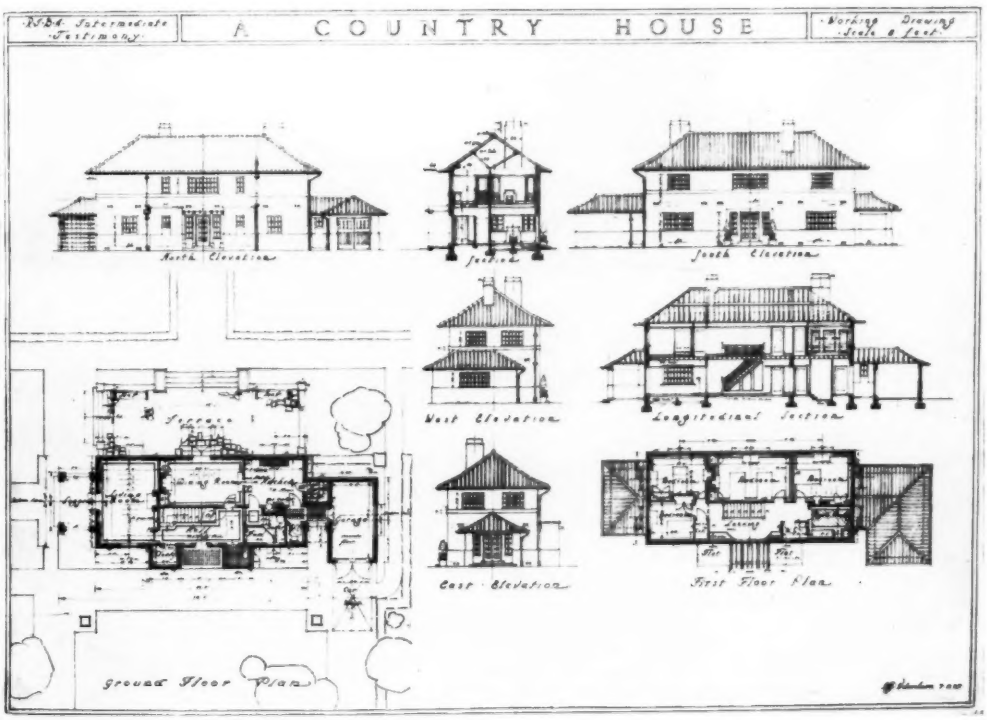
BY H. ST. J. HARRISON [*A.*].

The Department of Architecture at the University of Sheffield was inaugurated in 1907, with a view to providing better facilities for the students of architecture than the usual procedure of serving articles in an office.

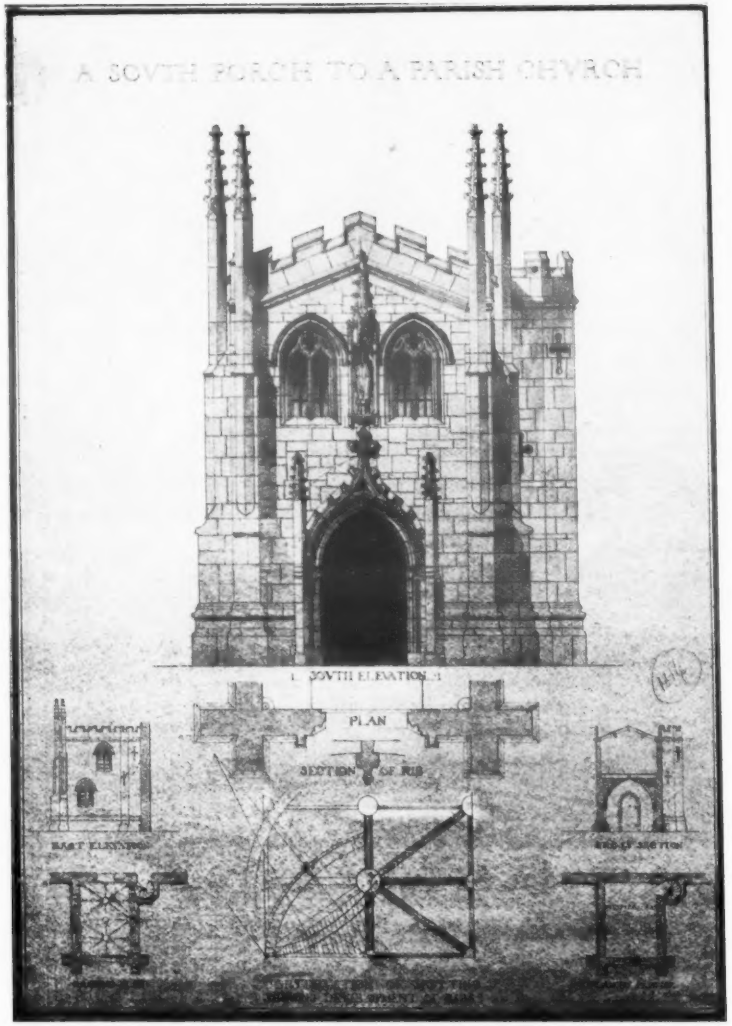
The local architects have supported and encouraged the school from its commencement, and its success is due, to a great extent, to the help and enthusiasm given by Mr. Edward M. Gibbs.

In the year 1911 the General School Course was recognised as being of such a standard as to warrant special recognition by the R.I.B.A. This recognition takes the form of exemption from the Intermediate Examination of the Royal Institute of British Architects, which is granted to all students who have satisfactorily completed the three years of the school course. It is hoped, in the near future to obtain from the Board of Architectural Education, exemption from the R.I.B.A. Final Examination.

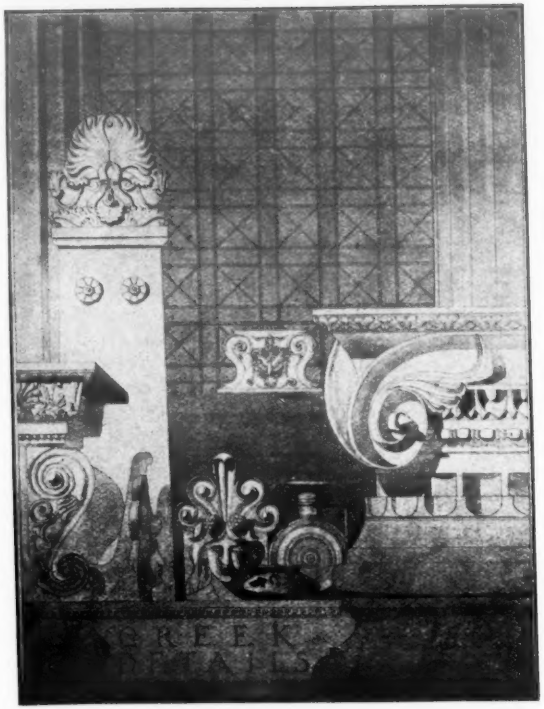
The part-time students attending the Department are at present serving articles in offices in Sheffield and the neighbouring towns of Chesterfield, Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley; their studies in the Department varying from half a day to three days per week, and there is good reason to hope that in the course of a year or two, intending young architects will give up the old




WORKING DRAWINGS
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD
Second Year




Department of Architecture, University of Sheffield
Second Year

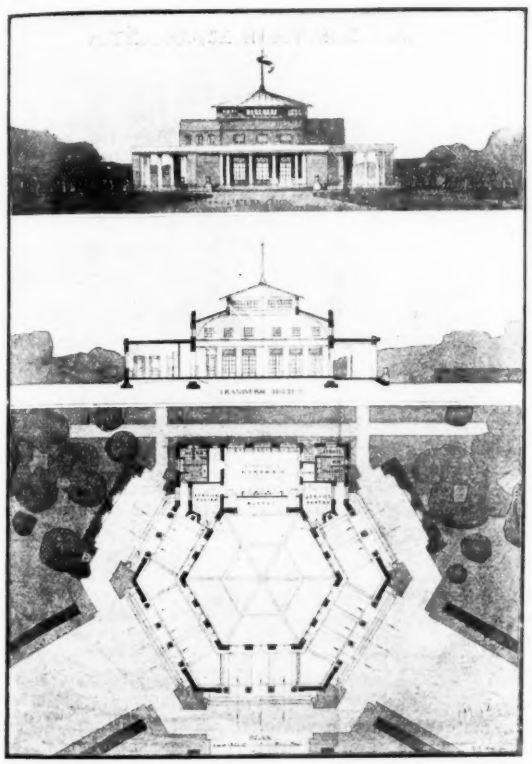



Department of Architecture, University of Sheffield
Second Year

road of articled pupilage to take the full course of instruction at the University.

Most of the full time students after completing the Intermediate course stay on for one or two years preparing themselves for the ordinary R.I.B.A. Final Examination. All students are encouraged to spend part of their vacation in approved offices.

The method of teaching is based on the general lines of the important architectural teaching centres in the country.



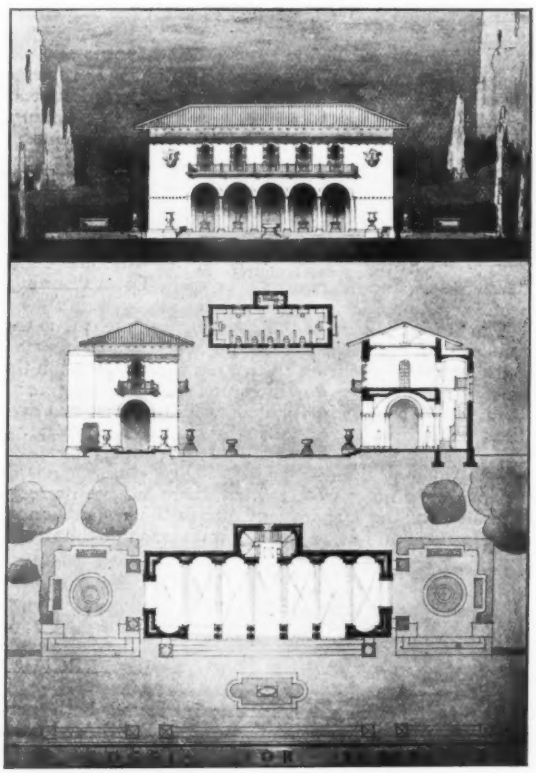
Department of Architecture, University of Sheffield
Third Year

The work of the first and second years is essentially elementary in character, and is designed to form a foundation for the more advanced courses of the later years.

The elements of architectural composition are outlined, and the importance of design is kept to the fore even in the most elementary technical study. The student is taught to understand the meaning of logical expression of simple architectural problems, to think of his work in three dimensions, and to realise that drawing for the architect is only " the means to the end."

Freehand drawing from the cast, the study and rendering of shades and shadows, and out-of-door measuring and sketching of old work, form an important part of the course.

A considerable portion of each term is devoted to the study of the various building materials and the method of their employment in building. Visits to buildings in course of erection are carried out in conjunction with the lectures on construction. All construction studies



Department of Architecture, University of Sheffield
Third Year

are, as far as possible, related to the importance of good design in constructional details, and the value of good materials, and their proper employment is emphasised.

The historical side of architecture is made familiar to the student through lecture and studio work ; the Classic orders are studied and drawn with special reference to their application in design. Plans of famous buildings are studied and analysed from the point of view of expression of purpose and architectural composition.

Having satisfactorily passed through the first year, the

Department of Architecture, University of Sheffield
Second Year
Department of Architecture, University of Sheffield
Second Year

student enters the second year, and the work is so arranged as to link up the first year with the intermediate third year.

Designs and composition are based on historical styles with a view to the study of good proportion and detail. Short studies in the form of sketch designs are prepared during the session. The designs form a basis for the study of construction, and working drawings, similar to those prepared in an office, are executed on linen with the necessary half inch and full size details.

Drawing is continued in freehand and geometrical form, and perspective is studied to assist the student to grasp the solidity of his building.

In the third year of the course the student is allowed to design according to his own imagination, and problems are set to give him as much latitude in free design as possible. The subjects include problems in planning, grouping, proportion and the practical requirements of modern buildings. Lectures are given on advanced construction, and working drawings are made in co-relation with the original designs.

The fourth and fifth years prepare work on a similar, but more advanced, basis to the previous year. Testimonies of Study are prepared for the R.I.B.A. Final Examination, and instruction is given in Town Planning, professional practice, estimating, etc.

The object and aim of the Department is to imbue the student with the spirit of true expression in architecture, to derive knowledge from all that has been achieved in the great periods of art and architecture, so that he may create work which is eminently suited to its purpose, and give pleasure to those generations who have to live with it.

Since these notes were written, there has been a reorganisation of the Department due to the resignation of Mr. Harrison, and the school is now under a full-time head.

Additions have been made to the curriculum, and Lectures on the Theory of Architectural Design are now given to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years while Decoration has been introduced as a subject of the fourth year course of study.

Subjects such as Construction, Testing of Materials, Surveying and Levelling and Mechanics are dealt with in the well equipped Applied Science Department of the University.

The Department provides the following courses of study :—

(*a*) B.A. Course with Honours in Architecture.

(*b*) Diploma Course.

(*c*) Certificate Course.

(*d*) Part time Course.

(*e*) Evening Course in Architectural Design.

(*a*) B.A. Honours in Architecture is granted to matriculated students who have taken the five years' course of study. In the first year two accessory subjects are taken one of which must be a language other than English.

(*b*) Diploma in architecture with distinction is granted to non-matriculated students who have taken the five years' course.

(*c*) Certificate in architecture is granted to students who have taken the three years' course.

(*d*) Part-time Course. This course includes facilities for attending lectures and for studio work.

(*e*) Evening Course in Architectural Design. This course is arranged to encourage the study of Architectural Design among students engaged in offices during the day.

Students who are qualified by previous training and experience are admitted to the Department and can enter either the second or third year course direct according to their standard of efficiency.

# B.E.S.A.

BY PERCIVAL M. FRASER [*F.*].

Having for many years been interested both personally and as a representative of the R.I.B.A., in the work of the British Engineering Standards Association (B.E.S.A.), I am glad to note that they are now about to be incorporated under Royal Charter. This, I understand, is something more than a formal reconstitution as there is in contemplation a programme which will greatly widen their sphere and increase their efficiency and usefulness to industry.

My object in writing is to call the attention of Members of the Royal Institute to the use which can be made of the B.E.S.A. in the conduct of their business. The function of the B.E.S.A. is the simplification and standardisation of materials and appliances used in engineering and building construction. It is an independent body free of Government control and it co-ordinates the interests of all parties concerned, viz., producers, distributors and consumers, together with the architectural, engineering and other experts. The object is to eliminate preventable waste, to assist in producing an efficient and economical article of a specific standard of quality and design and to simplify tendering by laying down equitable conditions. The ultimate object is to assist British industry to compete in the world's markets.

The Association has produced up to the present 350 specifications (in addition to 250 specially prepared for the Air Ministry) conceived, drawn up and published with the unanimous agreement of all the interested parties. The committee work is carried out by over 2,500 professional and business men without fee or expense. The Association is recognised and made full use of by the Government who have officials serving on the various committees.

The fact is, however, that not only are the great majority of the Members of the Institute ignorant of the value of the B.E.S.A. to them in pursuing their business,

but there are many architects who apparently have not heard of its existence. There are others who assume that the work is purely engineering in character whereas, in point of fact, the Association has for many years been carrying out standardisation and simplification work in connection with materials used in building construction. The word "Engineering" in the Association's title may perhaps contribute towards this failure to appreciate the scope of the B.E.S.A. work. The adjective is somewhat unfortunate and if, as I suppose, some modification of the title may now be desirable it would be well worth while to consider its removal. Some such title as the "British Empire Standards Association" would, I think, more accurately suggest its scope as it is closely associated with similar bodies in Australia, South Africa and Canada, and this would retain the distinctive initials.

It is supported by voluntary contributions mainly from industry. Many learned Societies and Government Offices also contribute, the Royal Institute donating £100 annually.

As regards the work of the Association which interests architects, I find that out of 350 Specifications well over 100 are directly connected with building materials and fittings. The very first specification to be produced was for rolled steel sections. In addition the following matters connected with the building trade have been dealt with: cement, steel, cast and wrought iron, bolts and screws, iron and stoneware pipes, electric cables, fittings and lamps, motors, etc., tars, paints, varnishes, asphaltes, lead, copper pipes, solder, cranes, fire-hoses, reinforcing bars, fire extincteurs, creosote, sandlime, bricks, drawing office practice, technical terms in engineering, zinc, fire resisting materials, oils, turpentines, etc., etc.

The B.E.S.A. were first formed over 25 years ago by the Institutions of Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers and the Naval Architects and the Iron and Steel Institute. Its extraordinary growth is evidence of its great need and that it fulfils efficiently its functions.

The Royal Institute is represented on this body by sixteen of its Members, of which two serve on the main committee.

It has been urged that standardisation is inimical to progress and invention, but the B.E.S.A. are fully alive to this objection and every development likely to affect the specifications is brought under review. In this respect the B.E.S.A. differs widely from the Building Bye-laws, Water Companies' Regulations and the like which have brought about deadlock in many branches of the building industry. The constitution of the Association absolutely precludes this kind of stagnation. The B.E.S.A. is thoroughly impartial and every conclusion is reached by practically unanimous agreement. By this same token the British Standards Specifications are not impracticable ideals, but are strong recommendations as to performance and very seldom touch on the process of manufacture, thus allowing full freedom for the manufacturer in his individual methods.

Wide as is the scope of the B.E.S.A. apparently a much greater scope is covered by similar organisations in Germany and America. Some of the results produced in America are very illuminating as, for example, the following:—

Fifty-five out of 65 different types of paving bricks were eliminated, 700 varieties of hotel crockery were reduced to 200; 4,000 kinds of spades reduced to 384; 81 types of bricks reduced to 2; 1,100 patterns of lavatory taps to 72.

In America in 1926 about £2,000,000 was spent in standardisation and in practically all the producing countries of the world standardisation and simplification are being organised on a national basis. In Great Britain the principle of proceeding along industrial lines instead of purely technical would appear to give the work in this country greater commercial value. A desire is felt for Imperial agreement on industrial standardisation and all the parties interested are working slowly but surely to this end. An Imperial Conference is to be called by the Board of Trade to further this object.

In conclusion it has often been urged that architects as a body are not progressive; that by the very nature of their calling they are brought up to revere tradition and to eschew that which is new and progressive. The new constitution of the B.E.S.A. will afford an opportunity for the Institute to identify itself more directly with the important activities of the Association. I am of opinion we ought to take a much more active part in the B.E.S.A. work and I am sure our closer co-operation would be welcomed. To this end I suggest that a special committee should be formed to act as a *liaison* between the Institute and the B.E.S.A.

Our Council last year passed a resolution in effect recommending members to adopt the following clause in all their specifications: "All goods not otherwise specified shall be in accordance with the British Standard specifications where such exist." This is sage advice, but is observed unhappily mainly in the breach.

Only the smallest fraction of architects has fathered the British Standard specifications. I would suggest that those who are interested should glance through the B.E.S.A. publications of which a complete list is (or should be) in the Institute Library. I am certain that all progressive members will then realise the saving in labour and responsibility to themselves and the advantage to their clients which would derive from the insertion of clauses insisting on materials and manufactured articles complying with the British Standard specifications. Two examples of typical specification clauses are given herewith:—

*Cement.*—The cement is to comply with the British Standard specification No. 12 for normal setting cement.

*Steel.*—The steel shall be of British manufacture and origin to comply with the British Standard specification No. 15.

It has always appeared to me that the B.E.S.A. are ideally fitted to undertake the somewhat staggering task of co-ordinating and clarifying the existing Building and Public Health Regulations and Byelaws. Every architect in practice feels the urgent need of this and with him the whole of the building industry and property owners throughout the country. Unfortunately there is no

solidity of front and, saving some panic legislation which was enacted during the war, nothing has been done to relieve the burden imposed on the one hand upon building owners in the way of unnecessary expense and on the other upon architects and builders in the irksome and supererogatory duties of assimilating and carrying into effect restrictions often couched in ambiguous language, which in themselves overlap and contradict.

The Royal Institute is the proper body to take the lead in this most urgent matter. I venture to suggest they should use the good offices of the B.E.S.A. to call a conference or rather a Congress of all the constituted authorities and interested parties. The B.E.S.A. is so well founded and of such good report throughout the British Isles that it is in a position to secure that national interest and action the absence of which in the past has resulted in so much abortive effort.

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## JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE USE OF COAL RESIDUES IN CONCRETE.

The Science Standing Committee desire to draw the attention of Members to the following report by the R.I.B.A. representative on the above Joint Committee :—

### The Use of Coal Residues in Concrete.

The danger of using breeze or any form of coal residue for concrete embedding or in contact with steel or iron has long been known, and for long has been attributed to the action of sulphur compounds in the breeze. In some countries, Germany for example, the use of coal residues in concrete is forbidden ; but in this country such a ban is mainly confined to its use in reinforced concrete.

If the well-known danger of corrosion were due entirely to the presence of sulphur, the disadvantage attending the use of breeze could also be obviated by using only material which showed upon analysis a negligible proportion of sulphur compounds.

The frequent recurrence of failures obviously due to expansion in cases which could not be explained by the presence of sulphur or the oxidation and consequent expansion of embedded metal introduced a strong element of doubt as to the accuracy of the theories usually accepted. At the instance of the Association of Floor Constructors a strongly representative committee was formed to study the subject, consisting of delegates from the R.I.B.A., the Institute of Civil Engineers, the Surveyors' Institution, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Institution of Municipal and County Engineers, the Institution of Structural Engineers, the Fire Offices Committee, the Institute of Builders, the Association of Floor Constructors, the Iron and Steel Institute, and the District Surveyors' Association.

As an intermediate step a small brochure, "Coal Residues in Concrete," containing full data of pre-war tests in England and Germany, with particulars of the regulations in force in the latter country, was published by the Association of Floor Constructors (55 Victoria Street, 1s. 6d.).

At an early stage of the proceedings it was obvious that the causes of failure were not confined to expansion due to sulphur or oxidation of embedded metal, and the D.S.I.R. supplied the important and interesting information that expansion had been traced conclusively to the presence of partially consumed coal of certain classes. The Committee after careful consideration were forced to reject as impracticable any method of selecting for use breeze from the innocuous coals ; and in their report, a précis of which is given below, they were only able to exempt from a general condemnation coal residues which were thoroughly vitrified and retained upon a ¼ inch mesh.

In smaller sizes there would appear to be danger from imperfectly cintered particles.

Even this small exemption is due only to a verdict of "not proven" rather than to a verdict of "not guilty."

Only under certain circumstances would the cost of the somewhat rigid inspection necessary, before such material could be used with confidence, be less than the saving secured by its use. Oxidation of embedded metal and sulphur compounds in coal residues appears to constitute only a small and negligible proportion of the causes of failure. Dangerous expansion can take place in concrete without any embedded metal and oxidation would appear to be due largely, if not entirely, to cracks due to expansion admitting air and moisture to any embedded metal.

In addition to the brochure referred to above, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research issued two Building Research Reports, viz., Special Report No. 10 "Slag, Coke Breeze and Clinker as Aggregates" (H.M. Stationery Office, 9d.), and Bulletin No. 5, "The Properties of Breeze and Clinker Aggregates and Methods of Testing their Soundness" (H.M. Stationery Office, 6d.), the latter containing a summary of investigations which are to be published *in extenso* as Technical Paper No. 7. Architects will be well advised to obtain and study all these publications before specifying the use of coal residues in any form.

Percy J. Waldram, F.S.I.

### Extract from the Report of the Joint Committee on the Use of Coal Residues in Concrete.

(1) The following coal residues, viz., ashes, cinders, coke breeze, breeze containing ashes or cinders and clinker, passing a ¼ inch mesh, are unsuitable materials for use as aggregate for concrete in contact with steel.

With regard to clinker, when thoroughly vitrified free from coal and screened, to be retained upon a ¼ inch mesh, the Committee is not yet in possession of sufficient information to determine whether such clinker used in place of coarse aggregates and in conjunction with a good, clean sand, is in itself detrimental and therefore reserves its decision on the use of such coarse clinker until it is in possession of conclusive information on this point.

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## CORROSION OF LEAD.

An example of serious corrosion of lead was recently brought to the notice of the Science Standing Committee, and was referred to the Building Research Station for their comments.

The building was a pickle factory in which patent glazing was used for the roof. The lead covering to the glazing bars and the lead flashings were affected by fumes in a comparatively short time, and a deposit of white powder was noticed on the benches and floor.

The Building Research Station, in their report, point out that metallic lead is, of course, readily affected by acetic acid fumes (the basis of vinegar), forming white lead, the white deposit referred to, and that the presence of this deposit in or near food is a serious matter.

If the metal bars must be retained, the lead should be stripped and the bars coated with titanium white paint, not lead paint or lithopone.

For a factory of this description, wood glazing bars would have been preferable.

C. S. W.

# Allied Societies

*(The attention of Members of Allied Societies is particularly called to this page.)*

## Notices

### THE SOUTH-EASTERN SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS.

The Kent Education Committee and the South-Eastern Society of Architects have arranged two illustrated lectures on "Beautifying Our Surroundings," to be given by R. Goulburn Lovell, A.R.I.B.A., in the Guildhall, Rochester, at 8 p.m. On Thursday, 7 March, Mr. Lovell spoke on "The Design of Buildings," and on Thursday, 14 March, his subject will be "The Improvement of Town and Countryside." The chair will be taken by the Mayor of Rochester.

### THE ARCHITECTURAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Harry Daborn Day, A.R.I.B.A.: Member R.I.B.A. since 1901—Registered 11 February 1929, Architectural Institute of British Columbia.

## Reports

### BERKS, BUCKS, AND OXON ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION.

The seventh annual dinner of the Berks, Bucks, and Oxon Architectural Association was held at the Caversham Bridge Hotel, Reading, on 12 February, Mr. R. A. Rix, A.R.I.B.A. (President), in the chair. The guests included the Mayor (Alderman John Rabson), the Vice-Chancellor of Reading University (Dr. W. M. Childs), Mr. Walter Tapper, A.R.A. (President of the Royal Institute of British Architects), Mr. J. Arthur Smith, F.R.I.B.A. (President of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Architectural Association), Mr. A. L. Roberts, F.R.I.B.A. (Honorary Secretary of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Association), Colonel F. R. Hybart, Mr. Ian MacAlister (Secretary of the Royal Institute), and the Rev. P. P. Knott, M.A.

Mr. E. P. Warren (Honorary Vice-President), proposing "The Town and University of Reading," spoke in high terms of the borough, both educationally and as a centre of commerce. Though, comparatively speaking, not large, it stood in deservedly high repute, and the propinquity of Oxford had not prevented the realisation of the borough's ambition to provide itself with a University that, in several respects, stood as an example to the educational world.

The Mayor replied. He emphasised the importance of creating for the people a beautiful environment and deplored the all too common failure to erect attractive buildings that should dovetail into natural surroundings. He repeated the suggestion that architects should, by means of suitably endorsed foundation stones, "sign" their productions, so that it might be easily ascertained when and by whom buildings were erected.

The Vice-Chancellor, in responding for the University, said the young University in Reading contained the secret springs of a great future. Even at this early stage in certain directions—notably in respect of its residential system of halls—it was showing the way. The speaker emphasised the rapid and extensive growth of the borough as a commercial and shopping centre, but deplored the lack of foresight that had resulted in such an extensive spoliation of the natural landscape—an amenity which, once lost, could never be regained. They looked to the architects of the country to use their art for the preservation and creation of beauty.

Councillor W. H. Short proposed "The Royal Institute of British Architects and Allied Societies."

Mr. Walter Tapper (President of the Royal Institute of British Architects), replying to the toast, claimed that the fundamental reason of the spoliation that had been spoken of was the ignorance of the layman. General education had never included a study of fine art, and this lack must be remedied were the beauties of our country to be preserved. Nevertheless, he claimed that the English landscape scenery comprised some of the most beautiful in the world. Architecture was not just a commercial business—it was the greatest profession in the world, and upon it rested the responsibility for removing the reproach that spoke in the contrasts of to-day with the absence of meanness and ugliness of two hundred years ago.

Mr. R. A. Rix (President of the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Architectural Association), who also replied, explained the connection of the Allied Societies with the Royal Institute of British Architects, and pointed out that their members were brought into close touch with the surveyors of the local authorities, with whom they maintained the most amicable relationship. He also referred to the assistance afforded by Allied Societies to the many modern problems with which they have to deal, such as the Preservation of Rural England, Town Planning, Housing, etc.

Mr. H. S. Rogers, in the absence of the President of the South Wales Institute of Architects, proposed, and Colonel F. R. Hybart, President of the Reading and District Building Trades Employer's Association, responded to "The Building Trades."

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION.

The possibilities of extending facilities for architectural education in Gloucestershire were considered at a meeting of the Gloucestershire Architectural Association in the Municipal School of Arts and Crafts on Thursday, 21 February. Mr. Stratton Davis presided, and amongst those present were Mr. A. Ward, A.R.C.A. (Principal of the Gloucester Municipal School of Arts and Crafts), Mr. Sallis Benney, A.R.C.A. (Principal of the Cheltenham School of Art), and Mr. Trew. Mr. G. D. Gordon Hake (Principal of the Royal West of England Academy School of Architecture, Bristol) was expected to address the meeting, but was prevented by illness.

The Chairman, in the course of his opening remarks, said architecture had been truly called the mistress of the arts; it was an art that most closely affected all their public and private lives. It seemed very strange therefore that architectural education had been so sadly neglected, particularly in the provinces. It was true that architecture was being taught to some extent in their private and public schools, but he thought that it ought to have a more important place in the curriculum.

In the provinces, the larger centres had schools of architecture which were recognised by the R.I.B.A. for the purpose of

exemption from the intermediate or final examinations of the Institute, and in some cases both. The nearest school of the kind in the district was the Academy at Bristol. But what about the districts such as Gloucester, Cheltenham, and Stroud? They had their schools of Art and Technical Schools doing their best against heavy odds—a very limited supply of students and also very limited funds. The young man or girl who wished to become an architect in their district started under distinct disadvantages unless their parents could afford to send them away.

It was obvious, he thought, that they could not start an independent school in Cheltenham or Gloucester. It seemed to him that they must look to the municipal schools, which had kept the flag flying under difficult conditions so far, and ask the authorities if they (the Association) might assist them in developing architectural training. Personally he would like to see properly arranged courses in architecture, certainly at Gloucester and Cheltenham, and if possible at other centres such as Stroud and Lydney, under the direction of the Principal of the West of England Academy School. The cost, he believed, would be a serious item, but he thought that might be overcome if they could persuade the authorities that the matter was really viral.

Mr. Ward expressed the opinion that in Gloucester there would not be serious difficulty in establishing means of instruction as suggested, provided there were pupils forthcoming. The great difficulty, he felt, was getting all the pupils together at one time. He thought if the architects could let the students in their offices attend regular classes at fixed times, a great difficulty would be overcome.

### Gloucester Municipal School of Arts and Crafts.

Prize drawings and testimonies of study, the work of students of the Royal Institute of British Architects, were on view during the last week of February at the Gloucester Municipal School of Arts and Crafts.

The exhibits, the display of which was arranged by the Gloucestershire Architectural Association, of which Mr. H. Stratton Davis is the president and Mr. Harold F. Trew the honorary secretary, were grouped under eight sections, and covered designs submitted for the various prizes and scholarships offered by the Institute during 1927. Some of the drawings were the work of students who had passed the intermediate examination of the Institute or reached an equivalent standard, and others by students who had passed their final examination or similarly reached an equivalent standard.

The exhibits were principally the work of students at architectural classes in the country, and there were no local exhibitors. The standard generally reached in the various sections is a very high one.

## NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION.

A dinner was held by the North Staffordshire Architectural Association at Stoke on Wednesday, 20 February 1929. Mr. Harold Goldstraw [*A.*], President, was in the chair. Among those present were the Lord Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent and Mr. Walter Tapper, A.R.A., President of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

The loyal toast having been honoured, the toast of "The Royal Institute of British Architects, the Allied Societies, and the North Staffordshire Architectural Association" was submitted by Mr. J. H. Barlow. It has been arranged for Mr. Andrew MacLaren, M.P., to submit the toast, but he was unable to attend owing to indisposition.

Responding to the toast, Mr. Walter Tapper said, since Mr. Arnold Bennett came to town he felt that they in London knew almost as much about the Five Towns—or rather six—as the Potteries knew about London. But he did not think they knew so much of what the Potteries was doing in architecture, even though two of Mr. Bennett's heroes were architects. In the company of Mr. Reginald T. Longden, who was a past President of the North Staffordshire Architectural Association, he hoped to know more about the architecture of the district. A few weeks ago he had the pleasure of presiding over a little gathering of experts from all over the country who had met in London to consider a scheme which Mr. Longden had formulated with a view to achieving better design in dwellings.

"The object of the scheme," said Mr. Tapper, "is one which we all have at heart. At least I hope we have. There is hardly anything to-day which gives so much pain and anxiety to architects as the desecration of this beautiful countryside of ours.

"We are appalled at the sight of the thousands of vulgar little houses and bungalows and even shacks which are spreading over the country, particularly along our roadsides. All these houses should be, and might be, added charms to the country. In the old days that was the case. They might not meet present-day needs as regards sanitation and so forth, but for the times in which they were built they were good, and healthy families were brought up in them.

"Instead of those beautiful cottages and houses we now have blistering eyesores, intrusions and impertinences and the vulgarity of it all is lamentable. There is no reason why it should be. We can build cottages to-day just as well, and with that quiet fitness and beauty, as they ever did in times gone by. Further they can be economically built.

"The trouble is that the skill and the art of the architect have not been brought to bear upon the lay-out, the design, or the materials, of these new houses. During my Presidency I have advocated that in the schools and colleges of this country a study of the fine arts should become part of our general education. We architects—some of us, at least—do all we can, but we could do a great deal more if the commercial men in this country, if the captains of industry, the great merchant princes, and the great civic authorities inspired us to do our best. I hope the day will come when people, rich and poor, and no matter to which sphere they belong, will realise that architecture is really a living thing, and can spiritually uplift and help people to live a proper life. Architecture is really a vital factor in life.

"I know perfectly well that you have to make money to live, but do not make commercial success the dominating factor in your life. If we make money the determining factor, we shall never be great architects. The thing we have to remember as architects is that, no matter how small the thing we have to do, it should be done with the understanding that it is going to have a good or evil effect on mankind. That is the standard I have tried to preach. I have preached it during my Presidency, and I shall preach it as long as I live.

"I suppose that a busy industrial region such as this is not exactly an encouraging area for an architect who realises the great possibilities of his art, and who sees the possibilities constantly ignored by the general community. Notwithstanding that, I think an architect ought to be inspired by the feeling that architecture is desperately needed in great industrial centres, cities and towns.

"Wherever an architect looks he sees something that calls for his skill and enthusiasms to put it right. There is much that needs rearrangement and improvement, so much that needs destruction and replacement. I think that, but for the loss of life, it would be a good thing if we could have an earthquake now and again."

Mr. Harold Goldstraw, President of the North Staffordshire Architectural Association, responding to the toast, said architecture was an asset to commerce, but it was difficult to convince a pottery manufacturer that the design of his façade

could possibly increase his sales. It was surprising that the production of the finest pottery in the world was evolved in such inartistic surroundings. They were glad, however, that the manufacturer was gradually becoming alive to the advantage of displaying his wares at the British Industries Fair on properly designed stands. Building was an essential not a luxury art. It expressed the conditions of the moment more forcibly than either painting or sculpture. If the association could make the man in the street take a live interest in the architecture of his city, the lectures that had been held by the association would not have been in vain.

The toast of " The City of Stoke-on-Trent " was proposed by Mr. Reginald T. Longden, F.R.I.B.A., a past President of the North Staffordshire Architectural Association. Urging the need for a good architectural library in Stoke-on-Trent, he declared that it would inevitably have its reflex in the vision of the public in the matter of design and lay-out of houses and buildings generally. Architecture was a sound asset to commerce, and good architecture was cheaper than bad architecture. Where the architect had had a chance as regards street architecture in the Potteries he had put up buildings distinctly creditable to his profession. It was gratifying that in the Stoke-on-Trent Corporation Bill was a clause, known as the Bath clause, whereby the local authority had the right of censorship of the design of a proposed building.

The Lord Mayor (Alderman W. T. Leason) responded.

## NORTHANTS, BEDS AND HUNTS ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS.

The first Bedfordshire meeting of the recently formed Northants, Beds and Hunts Association of Architects was held at the George Hotel, Luton, on Monday 4 February. Major B. C. Deacon, a vice-president of the Association, was in the chair.

A paper on " Inigo Jones, a Modern View," was given by Mr. J. Alfred Gotch, past president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, past president of the Northants Association. Mr. Gotch said that Inigo Jones had been credited with much architectural work to which, in reality, he had no claim. On the other hand, much of his most remarkable work had not received the attention it deserved. Inigo Jones was first and foremost an architect, although not universally employed as such. The duties of his office as surveyor to his Majesty's works occupied most of his time, and he had little opportunity for independent practice, practically the only work he undertook being from persons of the Court. His work in connection with the masques at the Court occupied a great deal of his time and energies, as he it was who designed the costumes and scenery. He was the pioneer of scenery as we knew it, and the success of the masques of those days was as much due to his skill and fertility of mind as to the services of such literary masters as Ben Johnson. Jones was, in fact, an all-round artist, and the most accomplished England had up to that time produced.

Probably no man achieved so great a reputation as an architect on so scanty a foundation. His surviving work was admirable, but his principal claim to fame was that he was chiefly instrumental in introducing into England true appreciation of Italian architecture. He had great natural abilities, which he cultivated to the utmost in certain directions. When all the corrections had been made which modern research suggested Inigo Jones stood out as one of the greatest designers in architecture and its allied arts England had produced.

### Annual General Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting of the Northants, Beds and Hunts Association of Architects was held at the Swan Hotel, Bedford, on 1 February, the President, Mr. H. Norman, F.R.I.B.A., in the chair.

The Honorary Treasurer (Mr. C. Croft) presented the statement of accounts, which showed that the Association is in a satisfactory financial position.

The Council's report on the work of the past Session was read and favourably received.

The following Officers were elected for the ensuing Session:—President: R. J. Williams [*F.*]; Vice Presidents: Major B. C. Deacon [*F.*] and F. H. Allen [*A.*]; Members of Council: Lieut.-Col. J. W. Fisher [*F.*], J. A. Gotch [*F.*], S. F. Harris [*F.*], Capt. H. Haines [*A.*], W. A. Lea [*L.*], J. Murray [*F.*], H. Norman [*F.*], W. B. Stonebridge [*F.*], and H. F. Traylen [*F.*]; Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, C. Croft [*L*]; Hon. Auditor, J. A. Piccaver.

The following donations were decided upon: Seven and a half guinesa each to the Architects' Benevolent Society and the R.I.B.A. Maintenance Scholarship Fund, and one guinea to the C.P.R.E.

The President explained the proposed development of the R.I.B.A. by the re-opening of the Licentiate class. The resolution to this effect was passed unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the President closed the meeting.

## THE SOUTH WALES INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS. WEST (CARDIFF) BRANCH.

Under the joint auspices of the Cardiff Branch of the South Wales Institute of Architects and the South Wales Branch of the Institute of Builders, a lecture was given at the Engineers' Institute on 14 February, 1929, by Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis, F.R.I.B.A. (Chairman, Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales) on " The Preservation of the Countryside—the Dragon *or* the Octopus.' The chair was taken by Mr. T. Alwyn Lloyd [*F.*] (Vice-President of the South Wales Institute of Architects).

Mr. Williams-Ellis illustrated his lecture by lantern views. One series showed the spoliation of country and town by bad and unsuitable buildings, by glaring advertisements and other wayside monstrosities. In contrast with these manifestations of " the octopus," there were other illustrations of the reverse process; good, or at least appropriate, buildings, old and new; comely villages; tree preservation; controlled advertisements, and even of attractive petrol stations.

Those present much appreciated the views of " Port Meirion," Mr. Williams-Ellis's object lesson in the building of a new holiday village in beautiful surroundings on the North Wales Coast. A strong appeal was made that those present, and all others concerned about the damage which was being done in ruining the amenities of country and town, should become associated with the C.P.R.W. and thus help in a positive way the work of reclamation.

### Annual General Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting of the South Wales Institute of Architects, Central Branch, was held on Thursday, 21 February, 1929, when the Honorary Treasurer's balance sheet and report, which were adopted, showed that the Branch was in a particularly healthy financial condition.

The Honorary Secretary's Report showed that a useful year's work had been carried out. Attention was drawn to the great help which the Branch had received from *The Western Mail and South Wales News*, and the architectural Press in giving publicity to their various activities.

The following officers and members of the Executive Committee were elected:—

Chairman: Mr. H. N. Edwards. Hon Treasurer: Mr. H. Teather [*F.*]; Hon. Secretary: Mr. W. S. Purchon, M.A. [*A.*] Executive Committee: Mr. Percy Thomas, V-P.R.I.B.A.,

Mr. F. H. Heaven [*A.*], Mr. Ivor Jones [*A.*], Mr. J. Williamson [*A.*], Mr. T. Alwyn Lloyd [*F.*]. Representatives of the Associates and Students: Miss O. E. Price and Mr. G. L. Price.

The following were elected as members of the Council of the South Wales Institute of Architects :—

Mr. H. N. Edwards, Mr. W. S. Purchon, M.A. [*A.*], Mr. J. Williamson [*A.*], Mr. Percy Thomas, V-P.R.I.B.A., Mr. F. H. Heaven [*A.*], Mr. J. Llewellin Smith [*L.*], Mr. Edgar Smith, Mr. A. G. Lynham [*F.*], Mr. J. L. Rees [*L.*], Mr. C. F. Jones [*A.*], Mr. J. B. Fletcher, Mr. W. D. Thomas. Representatives of Associates and Students: Mr. A. J. Hayes, Mr. J. R. Hallett [*L.*], Mr. A. G. Fletcher, and Mr. C. H. Evans.

A discussion on the activities of the Branch followed, in the course of which it was decided to support the proposal to arrange for the holding in Cardiff of the C.P.R.E. "Save the Countryside" Exhibition and to hold a series of informal discussions on matters of professional interest.

## WEST YORKSHIRE SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS.

Mr. G. H. Foggitt [*F.*], president of the above Society, took the chair at a meeting held in Leeds on 7 February, when a lecture on "Town Planning" was delivered by Mr. H. V. Lanchester, V-P.R.I.B.A.

In the course of his remarks Mr. Lanchester said :—

In the study of town planning as a vehicle imparting beauty to our cities, we shall inevitably be driven to start off from certain traditional standards. Modes of life only gradually change, and therefore their material expression can likewise only change by degrees. Apart from this we are usually concerned with the development of an existing city, and an emphatic change of character would be, even if logically defensible, artistically unsound.

At the same time a mere slavish adhesion to old methods is not demanded, as it is possible to eliminate what is obsolete and yet retain certain modes of expression that will preserve harmony between old and new. Too often in the past exactly the opposite course has been followed; old defects have persisted through the innate conservatism of man, while the impression of newness has been regarded as a virtue in itself instead of the vice that it so obviously is, when the newness is not based on logical development but merely on the dictates of a passing fashion. One has only to look at the later Victorian suburbs to find examples of this.

Normally, we shall see that monumental effects have now passed outside the general range of our work in town extension, the bulk of the area being employed for small houses either detached or in groups, but in neither case large enough to impress by their mass. While it has been found that pleasant effects can be secured by balanced or formal groupings in a limited area, extensive formal plans only impart an air of inadequacy and triviality to buildings of the scale required. The need for churches, schools and other public buildings gives us the opportunity of providing focal points that break the monotony of these large areas covered with small houses, which are admittedly less impressive than the dignified planning of the Georgian period, though superior to the slums that followed this. While we may admire the dignity of a city such as Bath, we must frankly and whole-heartedly accept the position that the type of planning it exhibits is not for us to emulate, and that we must endeavour to evolve a new type of beauty conformable to the changed requirements of our day.

We have brought the scale of the village into the town, but the village, indefinitely extended, loses its characteristic charm, and as it is rarely economically practicable to employ a series of isolated groups, our experiments in group planning will probably result in a compromise between the rigidity of the older town plan and the informality of the village, with the topographical formation of the site drawing us in one direction or the other.

Returning from the new suburbs to the centre of the city, we find that although our present Town Planning Act helps us but little, except in a case where a definite area is cleared for redevelopment, there are plenty of things to be done that come within the definition of Town Planning. Slum clearances and street improvements both demand skilful and imaginative handling if they are to raise the standard of civic design and make for finer and more orderly planning. Thus, while we await the grant of the further powers already in operation elsewhere, we can yet do much towards improving the organisation of our towns.

It is not yet regarded as practicable to bring the railways within the orbit of town planning, owing to their powers being derived from Acts of Parliament with which it is considered unwise to interfere, more particularly in view of the difficult financial position of railway enterprises at the present time. Nevertheless it is obvious that this omission leaves an awkward gap in the programme for a logical and comprehensive reorganisation of our cities. The handling of goods as apart from the passenger requirements involves a study of the demands of commerce and industry in relation to transport by rail as well as by road and water. In new developments these points have received attention, and unless attention is given to obsolescent arrangements in the older districts, business there is bound to suffer a handicap that will in the end put it out of the running.

This brings us to the aspect covered by the term "Zoning" as employed to imply the allocation of areas for specific purposes, such as manufacture, commerce, housing, etc. A rational zoning scheme is recognised as being of the first importance in the preparation of a development plan for an unoccupied area, and it is hardly less so in that for the reorganisation of old quarters that have become obsolete, though in this country we do not possess town planning powers for the purpose.

Zoning is also employed for the purpose of defining the different degrees of building density which may reasonably be permitted in different areas, and the distinctions are usually made by the proportion of the area allowed to be built over, and by height limitations.

### Exhibition of Students' Work.

Under the auspices of the West Yorkshire Society of Architects, at the Society's headquarters, Leeds, on 21 February, an exhibition was held of measured drawings and sketches of buildings abroad by students of the Leeds School of Architecture who had been successful in gaining the Society's travelling scholarships. The students were: A. Johnson, F. Mudd, J. R. Tolson, Harold Whitaker, and F. Chippindale.

### Debate by Members and Students.

At a meeting of the West Yorkshire Society of Architects, held at the Society's headquarters, Leeds, on 14 February, a debate took place by members of the Society and students of the Leeds School of Architecture, the subject for discussion being :—"That building is becoming a branch of engineering rather than of architecture."

Opening the debate in the affirmative, Mr. E. Bramham said that many ancient buildings which we had around us, such as cathedrals, abbeys, and churches, were built by craftsmen who had impressed these with their personality, and in those days, building was undoubtedly allied to architecture. Such craftsmen probably spent the best part of their lives upon the erection of one building, but the result of their work was architecture. This contrasted sharply with modern methods, where a twenty-story building was run up in say eighteen

months, and work went on to a time-table. New methods had been brought about by new materials. We had steel, concrete, terra-cotta, and glass used in forms undreamt of by builders of old, and the assembling of these materials had also brought into being new types of workmen ; craftsmen being largely superseded by mechanics whose work makes no demand on craftsmanship. We were indebted to engineers who have made possible the use of steel for the skeletons of our buildings, and we could take our buildings up to any height without fear of collapse, and could make our elevations unrestricted in their design. Engineers had taught us a new outlook on building, and had brought us abreast of the times. By placing building largely in the hands of engineers, we had ensured the progress of architecture.

Mr. Gilbert Dickenson, for the negative, contended that architecture implied the presence of attributes distinct from those arising out of the actual process of construction ; it implied the presence of an idea directing this process toward some definite end, with the object of endowing the resultant forms with the expression of this directing idea. The ruling idea of the architect alone brought the building within the realm of architecture. Engineering had always played a part in building. Wren was a mathematician before he became an architect. His calculations for stability of the dome of St. Paul's were most likely quite as involved as those of a modern engineer would be for a steel framed or ferro-concrete building. Brunelleschi and Michelangelo had mathematical minds, besides highly developed æsthetic senses, or they could never have constructed their famous domes ; and yet nobody has ever suggested that the engineering side dominated the architecture which they produced, and why should this be said nowadays ?

Mr. R. J. Edmondson [*L.*] thought that the architect would always be dominant ; the engineer being only a contractor, like the plumber or plasterer. The engineering element was necessary to keep the art of building sound, vital and adventurous, and when it became separated from architecture, the latter became an oppressive vehicle for mere ostentation.

Mr. J. Addison [*A.*], head of the Leeds School of Architecture, said that the construction of a building had now nothing to do with the elevation. Engineering had encroached largely upon the province of architecture. Some designs by engineers were very fine in their general lines, and we should not deny to engineers some æsthetic sense, for that sense was not only evident, but was growing ; but the architect had to conceive the general scheme of any building before the engineer and specialist were called in. He thought that the architect nowadays needed more scientific training.

Mr. G. H. Foggitt [*F.*], president, considered that architecture was an all-embracing art, of which engineering was merely a part. One could not say that the part was greater than the whole. The rapid advance of the engineering factor was probably due to the use of new materials and new forms of construction. This gave rise to the specialist. He did the exploring and experimental work ; but the architect should be trained to such ends, and spend more time on the scientific problems which confronted him. Engineers had given us the benefit of being able to build thinner walls, and this made for the fuller utilisation of the area to be built upon.

Mr. E. Seel thought that architecture formed the bridge upon which building and engineering joined hands. There was much ancient building which showed a lack of engineering skill and knowledge of the use of suitable material which nowadays had to be studied where economy was necessary. Architecture was having to adapt itself to engineering problems which were without doubt encroaching upon the pure functions of the art, but not so far as æsthetic functions were concerned.

Mr. J. Sidebottom Chairman, Mr. Victor Bain [*F.*] and Mr. F. W. H. Allison [*A.*] also spoke.

# Obituary

## THOMAS MacLAREN.

Thomas MacLaren, who was an Associate of the R.I.B.A. from 1892 to 1920, died at Colorado Springs in December last, and a few of us, still at work in London, remember him as a brilliant student and a dear friend. Were there ever such drawings sent up for the Pugin and other Studentships as he and some others produced at that time, now forty years ago !

Then, there were no well-appointed teaching institutes or anything like the mass production of young architects which we have to-day. The general standard of architecture was low but there were individual students, who by extraordinary concentration and by sheer hard work lifted themselves far above their fellows. In 1887 and 1888 MacLaren won not only the Pugin Studentship at the R.I.B.A., but both the Silver and Gold Medals and Travelling Scholarship for Architecture at the Royal Academy. This Studentship work, as was then usual, was done in holiday time and before and after office hours, sometimes not only by burning the midnight oil but, as in MacLaren's case, by getting up as early as 5.30 in the morning.

About this time he was fortunate in being under the influence of his brother James and of William Flockart, both brilliant designers, in advance of their times, who, by their personality, greatly impressed the young men of that period, Flockart's office becoming in fact a " school " of far-reaching impulse. Unfortunately, MacLaren's health was not equal to the continued strain, and he was forced to give up his idea of practising in London. Instead, he set up in the beautiful city of Colorado Springs, where he has lived his life and where he did a considerable amount of important work, including, besides domestic work and business premises, sanatoria, churches, and the town hall.

Besides his work MacLaren, by his scholarship and example, exercised a great influence amongst young architects all over America. Such men, like the monks of old, are missionaries in new countries, bringing with them the dynamic influence of sound ideals. The work which he did was an inspiration to the district in which he lived, and the lamp of architecture which he there tended and left shining will continue to give light long after he has gone. D. B. N.

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## FRANCO-BRITISH UNION OF ARCHITECTS.

### Annual Meeting 6 to 9 June, 1929.

The next annual meeting of the Franco-British Union of Architects will be held on 7 June, 1929, at Strasbourg (Alsace) at the invitation of the French Section of the Union.

British members will leave London on Thursday, 6 June, and if those who wish to take part in the meeting and the excursions which are being arranged, will send their names to H. P. Cart de Lafontaine, Secretary General, 11 Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, S.W.1, it will greatly facilitate arrangements with regard to hotel accommodation and travel.

It is hoped that reduced fares and special terms for rooms, etc., can be arranged, but this will, of course, depend on the number of British members who signify their intention of joining the party.

Further details, giving the agenda for the meeting and the itinerary of excursions, will be sent in due course to members who expect to be present. Ladies and guests may be invited by members to take part in this visit.

## THE GARDEN CITIES AND TOWN PLANNING ASSOCIATION.

The Garden Cities and Town Planning Association have arranged a tour this spring to Holland and Germany. The cities to be visited are The Hague, Amsterdam, Frankfort, Cologne, Dusseldorf and Essen. As the tour has been arranged with the local authorities concerned and representatives of those cities will accompany the party in each series of visits, a favourable opportunity will be afforded of seeing municipal development of varying character. The tour will leave London on Wednesday, 15 May, and return (a section of the tour) on Saturday, 18 May, or (the whole tour) on Saturday, 25 May. Full particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, 3, Gray's Inn Place, W.C.1.

## R.I.B.A. PROBATIONERS.

During the month of February, 1929, the following were registered as Probationers of the Royal Institute :—

ALLCHIN : WILFRED HENRY, The Beacon, Biggin Hill, Kent.
ANDERSON : RODERICK WILLIAM PINKERTON, "Sondela," Milner Road, Rondebosch, Cape, South Africa.
ARTHUR : KATHLEEN HUTTON, Glentore, Airdrie, Scotland.
ASHBRIDGE : VINCENT BARNES, Mountain View, Scales, Brayton, Carlisle.
ASHBEY : HARRY WALLINGTON, 33 Sabine Road, S.W.11.
AUTY : DONALD SIMPSON, 16 Queen Street, Emsworth.
AUTY : HAROLD EDWARD, c/o J. Auty, Flint House, Chichester.
BAIN : ALEXANDER ALVES, 28 Clyffard Crescent, Newport, Mon.
BAINES : GEORGE GRENFELL, 25 First Avenue, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston, Lancashire.
BALL : JOHN WESTCOTT, "Hazlebeech," The Drive, Rickmansworth.
BARLOW : LESLIE, 298 Hurdsfield Road, Macclesfield.
BARRATT : WILLIAM JOHN ARTHUR, 59 Dane Road, Stoke, Coventry.
BARTLETT : WILLIAM ALEXANDER, 6 Chestnut Gardens, Cliftonville, Belfast.
BEEBY : JOHN MURRAY, c/o Quick and Lee, 11 Waterloo Place, Leamington Spa.
BELL : THOMAS, 8 Waring Street, Belfast.
BENJAMIN : DANIEL, Babula Tank Road, Opp. Noor Bang, Bombay, No. 9.
BENNETT : PETER BAGAT, 37 Park Mansions, Hendon, N.W.4.
BERGOLZ : HENRY, 15 Hillside, Finchley Road, N.W.11.
BERLEMONT : MAURICE GEORGES, 49 Dean Street, Soho, W.1.
BERMAN : MAURICE DAVID, 119 Cape Road, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.
BHIDE : TRIMBAK RAJESHWAR, c/o D. W. Bhide, Coregionkar's Buildings, Bombay, No. 4.
BIDDULPH-PINCHARD : ROBERT EVELYN, Knotty Green, Beaconsfield, Bucks.
BLACK : JOHN ALEX., Elcott, Alma Road, Rosebank, Cape, South Africa.
BLUNDELL : EDWARD, 25 Flower Street, Carlisle, Cumberland.
BODENHAM : WILLIAM ERNEST, Junction House, Cannock Road, Heath Hayes, Stafford.
BOWDELL : ALFRED FRANCIS, 42 Athole Grove, Southport, Lancs.
BRADBURY : CYRIL EDWARD, 32 Beeches Road, West Bromwich, Staffs.
BRADLEY : FRANCIS CHARLES, 6 Co-operative Terrace, Dinnington, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
BROUGHTON : ERIC GEOFFREY, "Speedfield," Bedhampton Hill, Havant, Hants.
BROWN : DANIEL MACLAREN, c/o Jones and McWilliams, Box 268, Port Elizabeth.
BROWN : EDWIN HERBERT, 1 Rectory Lane, Tooting, London, S.W.17.
BROWN : ROBERT MAXWELL, Southfields, Laglan Road, Brooklands, Cheshire.
BULLEN : HARRY WALKER, 36 Upper Bedford Place, Russell Square, W.C.1.
BULMAN : CECIL GEORGE, 76A Botchergate, Carlisle.
BURRETT : CLEMENT VALENTINE, 8 Prospect Street, Reading.
CALLAHAN : ROBERT CHARLES, c/o Smithsons and Dewar, Box 309, Port Elizabeth.
CAMPBELL : GEORGE MILLICF, Stanley Terrace, Taringa, Brisbane, Queensland.
CARPENTER : ALFRED KEITH, 10 Florence Road, Bromley, Kent.
CARVELL : ROBERT CHARLES, 45 Sidney Road, Beckenham, Kent.
CASTLE : GEORGE GILBERT, Duxbury Hall, Liversedge, Yorkshire.
CATLOW : NORMAN, "Glencoed," Town Lane, Denton, Manchester.
CHAMBERLIN : GUY HESKETH, Orange Tree House, 8 Penywern Road, Earls Court, London, S.W.5.
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COLE : HERBERT CRAMER, Beech Hill Hotel, Bowness-on-Windermere.
COLLINS : EDWARD WILLIAM, 34 Tudor Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex.
COOK : THOMAS MACLANATHAN, Grange Cottage, Overton, near Wakefield.
COTTRILL : ALLAN, 16 Talbot Street, Rochdale, Lancs.
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DICK : CHARLES BARTY, 148 Whitehaugh Avenue, Paisley, Scotland.
DIXON : CHARLES JOHN, 101 Wood Lane, Harborne, Birmingham.
DONATI : EDWARD WILLIAM, Holnicote, Allerford, Taunton.

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DUCKHAM: RICHARD PHILIP, "Strathmore," Torrington Park, N. Finchley, N.12.
DUNN: LESLIE JAMES, 82 Channel View Road, Eastbourne, Sussex.
DURR: FRANS JACOBUS, "The Gables," Kew Road, Mowbray.
DYER: RALPH EDWIN, Manor House, Wiveliscombe, Somerset.
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MACINTYRE : COLIN, 65 Middleton Street, Alexandria, Dumbartonshire.
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MACKENZIE : JAMES MENZIES, 30 Durham Street, Monifieth.
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MARTIN : JACK EDWIN, 3 Anderson Street, Chelsea, S.W.3.
MARTIN : WALTER HARRY, 10 Dorset Road, Tunbridge Wells.
MASSON : JOHN, 53½ Powis Place, Aberdeen.
MATTHEWS : NOEL WILKINSON, 19 Prince's Road, Heaton Moor, Stockport, Cheshire.
MCDONALD : JAMES KENNETH, Schoolhouse, Farnell, by Brechin, Angus.
MELLOR : HUGH VERNON, 17 Egerton Park, Worsley, Lancs.
MELLOR : RONALD, 3 Bute Road, Mannamead, Plymouth.
MERRIFIELD : HAROLD WILLIAM, " Clevedon," Wonford Road, Exeter.
MESSENGER : ROBERT MICHAEL VEITCH, " The Hut," Hillborough Road, Herne Bay, Kent.
MIDDLETON : LEONARD SIDNEY, 50 Pagitt Street, Chatham, Kent.
MILLS : WILLIAM, Salford House, Turner Street, Sparkbrook Birmingham.
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MORCAN : ERNEST JAMES, Russell House, Cleadon Village, Sunderland.
MORRIS : GWYN HENRY, 14 Lemington Gardens, Sherwood, Nottingham.
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MORRIS : THOMAS SHEPHERD, 32 Abbey Gardens, St. Johns Wood, N.W.8.
MORRISON : JAMES, 3 Brands Brae, Gannochy, Perth, Scotland.
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NORTHMORE : SOLOMON ROY, Windyridge, Westella Road, Yelverton, South Devon.
NUNWEEK : ARTHUR DESMOND, Sandygate Grange, Sandygate, Sheffield.
OLDACRES : RUTH MARY, Pyrford House, Woking.
ORD : AUSTIN, 17 Baring Street, South Shields, co. Durham.
OSBORN : LESLIE, 5 Carlton Terrace, Botcherby, Carlisle, Cumberland.
PADDICK : CHARLES WILLIAM, Kidmore End, Reading
PAQUAY : ALBERT FRANÇOIS MARIE, " Belle Vue," 21 Hendford, Yeovil, Somerset.
PARKER : RICHARD JOSEPH, 3 The Highlands, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex.
PEARCE : ERIC, 27 Birchwood Road, West Byfleet, Surrey.
PEGRAM : CHRISTOPHER HAROLD, 129 Huntingfield Road, Putney, S.W.15.
PICKFORD : BRIAN LOWTHER, Wyke Vicarage, Normandy, Guildford.
PLATTS : JOHN ANTHONY CALVERT, 10 York Place, Scarborough, Yorks.
POLICANSKY : MAX, Marmion Road, Oranjezicht, Cape Town.
PORTWOOD : VALENTINE THOMAS HENRI, 114 Queen's Gate, Kensington, S.W.7.
POULSON : JOHN GARLICK LLEWELLYN, " Montpellier," Knottingley, Yorkshire.
PURVES : ANDREW, 239, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.
PYNE : ALBERT SIDNEY, 2 Hartland Road, Queen's Park, N.W.6.
RAYNHAM : JAMES ERNEST, 5 Cope Place, Kensington, W.8.
READ : ALBERT HENRY, 25 Risby Grove, Coningham Road, Hull.
READ : DONALD JAMES, " Glencoe," 27 Sunnyhill Road, West Southbourne, Bournemouth, Hants.
REES : IORWERTH OWEN, " Bodlondeb," Penybank, Ammanford.
REXILIUS : PAUL HUGO GEORGE, 37 Clipstone Street, London, W.1.
RICHARDS : FLORENCE JOAN MARY SLOANE, 73, Springfield Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.8.
RICHARDSON : CYRIL LESLIE, 12 Mount Ephraim Road, Streatham, S.W.16.
RICHARDSON : JOHN ERIC, 104 Campbell Road, Stoke-on-Trent.
RODGERS : FRANCIS JOSEPH, Thornbeck, Woodland Road, Darlington.
ROSE : CHARLES ALEXANDER, c/o Nicholson, 6 Whitehall Place, Aberdeen.
ROSS : NEIL, 28 South Mount Street, Aberdeen.
ROTHSTEIN : JOSEPH, " Hollywood," 52 Amhurst Park, Stamford Hill, London, N.16.
RYALL : REGINALD CHARLES, 182, Kennington Road, S.E.11.
SACKETT : GEOFFREY GORDON, Summerfields, Barnt Green, Worcs.
SALSBURY : ERNEST CYRIL, " Iona," Breedon Street, Long Eaton.
SANDS : LEONARD OWEN, 30 Suffolk Road, Gravesend, Kent.
SCOTT : ROY DUDLEY, 272 Cowley Mansions, Mortlake, Surrey, S.W.14.
SHARP : MILES BALMFORD, " Norley," Hinckley Road, Nuneaton, Warwicks.
SHARPE : LESLIE JOHN, " Donego," Erroll Road, Romford.
SILLS : HAROLD, 10 Barrington Road, Wallasey, Cheshire.
SIMPSON : BERNARD ARTHUR, Water Road, Walmer, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.
SIVELL : ARTHUR LEONARD, Four Oaks, Havant Road, North Hayling, Hants.
SLATTERY : BRIAN ARTHUR, 22, Bridge Road, Grays, Essex.
SLEIGHT : EDWARD, 59, Berkshire Street, Mersey Street, Hull.
SMITH : JAMES WILLIAM GEORGE, 28 Elthiron Road, Fulham, London, S.W.6.
SMITH : WALTER KENNETH, 88 Queen's Drive, Mossley Hill, Liverpool.
STANTIALL : HAROLD JOSEPH GEORGE, 23 Riverway, Palmers Green, N.13.
STENT : JOHN ARTHUR, 8 Pollard Road, Whetstone, N.20.
STERNFELDT : SVEN MICHAEL BENVENUTO, Svenstorzs, Chorleywood, West Herts.
STORRAR : HORACE REUBEN, " Glenesk," Park Avenue, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex.

SYMON : JAMES SCOTLAND, High Street, Errol, Perthshire, Scotland.
TAGGART : HENRY LINN, High Street, Gilford, co. Down.
TARLING : CHARLES, 27 Dacre House, Beaufort Street, Chelsea, S.W.3.
TATE : WALTER BUCHANAN, 22 Chapel Road, Southampton.
TAYLOR : GEORGE BRAITHWAITE, 82 Thornhill Road, Handsworth, Birmingham.
TEMPLEMAN : ALAN, 31 Crofts Bank Road, Urmston, Manchester.
THOMAS : WILLIAM STEPHEN, " Thornbury," Eveswell Park Road, Newport, Mon.
THOMASON : ARTHUR EDWARD, 24 Morley's Hill, Burton-on-Trent.
THOMPSON : ARTHUR JAMES MALCOLM, 42 Stanley Road, Bournemouth.
THOMPSON : JAMES RILEY, Westgate, Elland.
THOMSETT : CHARLES PERCIVAL, Haste Hill, Boughton Monchelsea, near Maidstone, Kent.
THORNE : KENNETH HARRY, 7 Oak Tree Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton.
THORNTON : ERIC BARKER, 37 Devonshire Street, Skipton-in-Craven.
TOMEI : LAURENCE FRANCIS STEPHEN, 40 St. John's Road, Penge, S.E.20.
TORRENS : RICHARD MICHAEL, Toc H, Mark VII, 15 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1.
TRAVISS : FREDERICK JOHN HENRY, 60 Chaplin Road, Willesden Green, N.W.2.
TREPESS : THOMAS, 12 Beresford Street, Warrington.
TRINDADE : ZEPHYRIMUS AVELINO, P.W.D. Colombo, Ceylon, India.
TUNE : HAROLD GEORGE, 32 Inverine Road, Charlton, S.E.7.
VAUX : EDWARD HUGH, 101 Albert Bridge Road, S.W.11.
VINSON : HENRY IVOR, 15, Northesk Street, Stoke, Devonport, Plymouth.
WALKER : WINSTON, 13 Oak Terrace, Churwell, Leeds.
WALKER : WILLIAM ION, 37 Castle Street, Kendal.
WALTERS : HARRY, 28 Duchy Avenue, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs.
WARD : GEOFFREY RUSSELL, 8 High Street, Acton, W.3.
WARD : NORMAN WALTER, 40 Cedars Road, Hampton Wick, Middlesex.
WEBB : ERNEST STANLEY, " Sundew," 47 Benhill Avenue, Sutton, Surrey.
WEBB : JOHN KIRSOP, 13 Browning Avenue, Sutton, Surrey.
WEBBER : CHARLES, " Willon Dale," Paignton.
WELCH : WILLIAM, Hay-a-Park, Knaresborough.
WESTON : CLAUDE FREDERICK, Gardeners' Cottage, High Ashurst, near Dorking, Surrey.
WHEELDON : CYRIL DENIS, Elm Villa, Elm Avenue, Long Eaton, Derbys.
WHITE : GEOFFREY RICHARDSON, 10 Arncliffe Terrace, Northallerton, Yorkshire.
WHITEHEAD : WILLIAM, 50 Church Street, Wallasey, Cheshire.
WHITESIDE : JOHN, High Street, London Colney, near St. Albans, Herts.
WHITING : HAROLD, 25 Torquay Road, Newton Abbot, Devon.
WHITTON : HENRY, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon.
WICKS : GEORGE PRESTON, 56 Maldon Road, Acton, W.3.
WILCOX : RONALD JOHN, New Street, Holt, Norfolk.
WILKINSON : ARTHUR, 94, Gladstone Park Gardens, Cricklewood, N.W.2.
WILKINSON : JAMES ARTHUR, Croysdale, Chester Road, Poynton, near Stockport.
WILLIAMS : ANDREW HAY, " Fairbourne," Manor Hill Road, Marple, Cheshire.
WILLIAMS : ERNEST EDWARD, 29 Kings Road, East Sheen, Surrey, S.W.14.
WILLIAMSON : JACK LESLIE, Gordon Road, Melton Constable, Norfolk.
WILSON : HOWARD (JUN.), 254, Hanson Lane, Halifax.
WOMACK : ARTHUR, Chevet Road, Newmillerdam, Wakefield, Yorks.
WOOD : WILLIAM, 276, Oldham Road, Rochdale, Lancs.
WOODHEAD : ALAN JOHN, " Camberley," Chislehurst Road, Orpington, Kent.
WOODHEAD : DONALD VICTOR, " Camberley," Chislehurst Road, Orpington, Kent.
WOODS : BERTRAM MEREDITH, Matopo Estate, P.B. Bulawayo, Rhodesia.
YOUNG : CYRIL HARRY, 3 London Road, Staines, Middlesex.
YOUNG : FRANCIS CYRIL, 9 Garendon Street, Leicester.

# Notices

## SPECIAL AND BUSINESS GENERAL MEETINGS. 18 MARCH 1929.

A Special General Meeting will be held on Monday, 18 March 1929, at 8 p.m., for the following purposes :—

To read the Minutes of the Special General Meetings held 8 and 25 January 1929.

To elect the Royal Gold Medallist for the current year. The Chairman to move :—

" That subject to His Majesty's gracious sanction, the Royal Gold Medal for the promotion of architecture be presented this year to Monsieur Victor Alexandre Frederic Laloux, Hon. Corr. Member, of Paris, in recognition of the merit of his work as an architect."

## THE TENTH GENERAL MEETING.

The Tenth General Meeting (Business) of the Session 1928-29 will be held on Monday, 18 March 1929, at the conclusion of the Special General Meeting, for the following purposes :—

To read the Minutes of the General Meeting (Ordinary) held on Monday, 4 March 1929 ; formally to admit members attending for the first time since their election.

To proceed with the election of the candidates for membership whose names were published in the JOURNAL for 23 February 1929 [pp. 341-2].

## NEW PREMISES FOR THE R.I.B.A. : SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING. 18 MARCH 1929.

A Special General Meeting will be held on Monday, 18 March 1929, at the conclusion of the Tenth (Business) General Meeting, for the following purposes :—

The Council to submit for consideration Resolutions authorising them to purchase premises situated in Portland Place, W.1., as a site for the erection of new premises for the R.I.B.A.

### INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF MATTERS OF PROFESSIONAL INTEREST.

At the conclusion of the above Special General Meeting there will be an informal and private discussion of matters of current professional interest or concern. Members are invited to bring up for discussion, with or without notice, subjects of professional interest or difficulty.

## MEETING OF SALARIED MEMBERS.

A meeting will be held at the R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, W.1, on Friday, 22 March, at 6 p.m. for the purpose of explaining the aims and objects of the Salaried Members' Committee, more particularly with regard to the letter which was sent to all members on 24 January 1929. *All salaried members are asked to make a point of attending this meeting.*

## LECTURES ON ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE.

Following upon the lectures for practising architects which were given by Mr. W. E. Watson before Christmas, the Science Standing Committee have now arranged for two more lectures to be given on Thursday, March 14th, and Thursday, March 21st, at 6 p.m.

The subject chosen is "Insect Pests in Timber," and is one of great importance to architects at the present time. Professor J. W. Munro, of the Imperial College of Science and Technology, who has kindly consented to deliver them, will deal in his first lecture with insects affecting unworked timber and in particular with the Lyctus beetles. Recently these beetles have become of real concern to architects and building contractors, who may quite innocently be involved in serious difficulty through lack of knowledge of the beetles and their habits. Professor Munro will therefore deal briefly with the important groups of beetles found in unconverted timber, with the types of damage they do and their importance in structural work.

In his second lecture, Professor Munro will deal with the Furniture and Death Watch beetles, which are more properly the enemies of timbers *in situ* in buildings.

Professor Munro will explain the present position with regard to remedial measures and will point out that until some practical experimental work is done on a large scale it is possible to apply measures which are only palliative. He will deal briefly with these palliative measures and discuss lines of promising experiment.

No charge will be made for admission and members and their friends are cordially invited to attend.

## R.I.B.A. DEBATES BETWEEN ARCHITECTS AND SPECIALISTS.

The following is the programme for the remaining debates :—

*Tuesday*, 19 *March* 1929, *at* 5.30 *p.m.*—
Subject : "Metal Fittings of Buildings in Modern Practice."
Speakers : Mr. W. G. Pringle, of Messrs. Bague's, Ltd.
Mr. Robert Atkinson, F.R.I.B.A.

*Tuesday*, 23 *April* 1929, *at* 5.30 *p.m.*—
Subject : "Organisation."
Speakers : Mr. Matthew Hill (Messrs. Higgs and Hill).
Mr. Maurice E. Webb, D.S.O., M.C., F.R.I.B.A.

It is hoped that as many as possible will attend the debates and that the discussions will be general and useful.

## EXHIBITION OF ARCHITECTS' WORKING DRAWINGS.

An exhibition of architects' working drawings will be held in the R.I.B.A. Galleries from Tuesday, 12 March, to Thursday, 21 March 1929, inclusive.

The exhibition will be open daily between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. (Saturday 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.) and will include drawings lent by Mr. L. H. Bucknell, Sir John Burnet and Partners, Messrs. Easton and Robertson, Messrs. Elcock and Sutcliffe, Mr. C. H. Holden, Sir Edwin Lutyens, R.A.

The exhibition is intended primarily for students of architecture : they will be able to examine the drawings that a practising architect hands to a contractor, and thus will be afforded an insight into the methods adopted in a modern architect's office.

A special Students' Evening will be held at the exhibition on Friday, 15 March, at 8 p.m. All students are cordially invited to attend. It is hoped that the architects, or their representatives, who have lent the exhibits will be present in order to explain the drawings to the students. Refreshments will be provided and no cards of admission are required.

## R.I.B.A. STATUTORY EXAMINATIONS.

The R.I.B.A. Statutory Examinations for the Office of District Surveyor under the London Building Acts, or Building Surveyor under Local Authorities, will be held at the R.I.B.A., London, on 1, 2, 3 May 1929.

The closing date for receiving applications for admission to the Examinations, accompanied by the fee of £3 3s., is 10 April 1929.

Full particulars of the Examinations and application forms can be obtained from the Secretary R.I.B.A.

## PROPOSED TOUR TO THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

It will be remembered that an announcement was made in the JOURNAL some little time ago regarding a proposed visit to America, and the Secretary has pleasure in announcing that arrangements have now been completed for a party of members of the Institute and Allied Societies to make a short trip to the United States and Canada in July next.

The party will sail from Liverpool for New York by the Cunard liner *Laconia* on 13 July, and will return from Quebec by the *Ascania* on 3 August, arriving in Plymouth 10 August, and London on 11 August. The places visited on the other side will include :—

New York—Washington—Detroit—Niagara Falls—Toronto—Montreal—Quebec

the trip from Toronto to Montreal being made by steamer down the River St. Lawrence, passing the Thousand Islands *en route*.

The cost of the trip will be approximately £95, this figure including cabin class accommodation on the above mentioned steamers, rail fares in the U.S.A. and Canada, hotel accommodation (exclusive of meals ashore), sightseeing trips, etc., and it is believed the trip will prove most attractive.

The Secretary R.I.B.A. will be glad to hear from those members who are interested and to forward a detailed itinerary of the tour on request.

Relatives and friends of members will be welcomed.

## THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE R.I.B.A. AND ALLIED SOCIETIES.

All Members and Students of the R.I.B.A. and all Members of the Architectural Association and of the Allied Societies are cordially invited to attend the Conference to be held in York from 12 to 15 June 1929, inclusive. Further particulars will be issued in due course.

### ASSOCIATES AND THE FELLOWSHIP.

Associates who are eligible and desirous of transferring to the Fellowship class are reminded that if they wish to take advantage of the election to take place on 10 June 1929, they should send the necessary nomination forms to the Secretary R.I.B.A. not later than Saturday 13 April 1929.

### LICENTIATES AND THE FELLOWSHIP.

The attention of Licentiates is called to the provisions of Section IV, Clause 4 (b) and (cii), of the Supplemental Charter of 1925. Licentiates who are eligible and desirous of transferring to the Fellowship can obtain full particulars on application to the Secretary R.I.B.A., stating the clause under which they propose to apply for nomination.

# Competitions

### COMPETITION FOR THE DESIGN OF A NATIONAL SIGN FOR PETROL FILLING STATIONS AND GARAGES.

A Committee appointed by the Home Secretary has been considering amongst other things the question of the exhibition of advertisements on petroleum filling stations in connection with the powers granted by Parliament to County Councils and Borough Councils to make bye-laws for regulating the appearance of such stations under Section XI of the Petroleum (Consolidation) Act, 1928.

The Committee has not yet presented its report to the Secretary of State, but after hearing evidence it is unanimously agreed that, if the appearance of petroleum filling stations is to be improved, the exhibition of advertisements, visible from off the premises, should be rigidly restricted, and in their place a standard form of sign should be adopted sufficient to indicate to the public the presence of filling stations and the different brands of petroleum spirit, oil, etc., retailed on the premises and the different classes of service to be obtained there.

For this purpose the Committee desire to obtain an attractive design of a sign which can be embodied in bye-laws to be made by County Councils or Borough Councils and which will thus become a standard for the country, easily recognisable by all motorists.

A competition has been arranged and the conditions have been drawn up by a jury appointed by the President R.I.B.A. and consisting of Mr. Oswald P. Milne [*F.*], (Chairman), Mr. Oliver Hill [*F.*], Mr. Edward Maufe [*F.*], Mr. H. P. G. Maule [*F.*], and Mr. Basil Oliver [*F.*].

The jury will assess the competition and a prize of £50 will be awarded for the best design submitted, with a further sum of £50 should the design be adopted.

The last day for receiving designs will be Friday 22 March 1929.

The conditions of the Competition are now ready and copies can be obtained on application to the Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

### PROPOSED NEW HALL, THE MOUNT SCHOOL, YORK.

The "Promoters," the Committee of the Mount School, invite Architects who are members of the Society of Friends or those who have at one time attended either the Bootham School or the Mount School, York, to submit designs in competition for a New Hall, proposed to be erected on a site adjoining Dalton Terrace.

Assessor: Mr. J. Mansell Jenkinson [*A.*].

Premiums: £50, £30 and £20.

Last day for questions: 1 March 1929.

Last day for sending in designs: 24 April 1929.

Conditions and site plan may be obtained on application to Dr. C. E. Hodgson, The Mount School, York.

### BAILDON U.D.C. HOUSING SCHEME COMPETITION.

The Competitions Committee desire to call the attention of Members to the fact that the Conditions of the above Competition are not in accordance with the Regulations of the R.I.B.A. The Competitions Committee are in negotiation with the promoters in the hope of securing an amendment. In the meantime Members should not take part in the competition.

### COMPETITION FOR THE COLUMBUS MEMORIAL LIGHTHOUSE.

A copy of the report containing complete details of the conditions governing the above competition has been received in the R.I.B.A. Library. Members who desire to enter the competition are required to fill up a registration form and return it to the Pan American Union, Washington. A number of forms are being sent to the R.I.B.A., and can be obtained from the Secretary as soon as they are received. Preliminary details of the competition were published in the R.I.B.A. JOURNAL, 14 July 1928.

### SIMON BOLIVAR MEMORIAL.

PRELIMINARY DETAILS OF A COMPETITION FOR THE ERECTION OF A MONUMENT TO THE LIBERATOR BOLIVAR IN THE CITY OF QUITO.

A competition has been opened for the erection in Quito of a monument to Bolivar.

The Ecuadorean Minister in Paris and two members of the Sociedad Bolivariana of Quito, residing in Paris, will form a Committee to organise and carry out the said competition.

A jury of four members, composed of experts, artists and art critics will judge the works presented.

The designs, "Esbozos" (drawings or sketches), "maquettes," etc., which it is desired to present must be forwarded to the Legation of Ecuador, 91 Avenue Wagram, Paris, not later than 31 March 1929.

The sum of 2,000,000 French francs is available for the purpose of erecting the monument. This sum includes the fees of the artist who will carry out the work, either by himself or with others acting under his direction.

Honourable mention will be awarded to the authors of the designs adjudged second and third.

The decision of the Jury will be submitted to the Sociedad Bolivariana, of Quito, for ratification, prior to the contract with the author of the selected design being signed.

# Members' Column

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

LT.-COL. H. P. CART DE LAFONTAINE [*A.*] has transferred his office from 6 Gray's Inn Place, W.C., to 11 Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, S.W.1. Telegraphic address :—" Fontartect," Piccy London. Telephone number, Gerrard 8528.

MR. PERCIVAL M. FRASER, F.R.I.B.A., has transferred his office to 87 Buckingham Palace Road. Telephone No. remains as before, Victoria 9189.

PARTNERSHIPS.

YOUNG Architect with sound general training and experience wishes to obtain Partnership. Would join older member contemplating retirement. Not afraid of work. Capital available.—Reply Box No. 4329, c o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

PARTNERSHIP required in London or Kent district by A.R.I.B.A. with wide and exceptional experience as designer and detailer of high-class Domestic, Bank and Office Buildings. Highest references.—Apply Box 1128, c o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

OFFICE TO LET.

WESTMINSTER architect has single first floor room to let, preferably to young man starting practice who would give occasional assistance. Very good position.—Write Box 8354, c o Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

OFFICE to let, two rooms second floor, partially furnished, John Street, Bedford Row, W.C.1.—Reply Box 4205, c o Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION.

FELLOW of the Institute with a West-end office having a room to spare desires to meet another architect with a view to sharing accommodation and running expenses.—Apply Box 7474, c o Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

F.R.I.B.A. with an office in the West-end desires to meet another architect with a view to sharing accommodation and running expenses.—Apply Box 2118, c o The Secretary R.I.B.A., 9, Conduit Street, London, W.1.

SUPERVISION OF WORK.

PROVINCIAL Member undertakes supervision of work for other architects in Devon and Cornwall. Experienced in Factory, Domestic, Business Premises, etc.—Box 3233, c/o Secretary R.I.B.A., 9 Conduit Street, London, W.1.

# Minutes XIII

SESSION 1928–1929.

At the Ninth General Meeting (Ordinary) of the Session, 1928–29, held on Monday, 4 March, 1929, at 8 p.m.

Mr. E. Stanley Hall, Vice-President, in the Chair.

The attendance book was signed by 19 Fellows (including 8 members of Council), 15 Associates (including 3 Members of Council), 2 Licentiates (including 1 Member of Council), 1 Hon. Associate and a large number of visitors.

The Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on 18 February, 1929, having been published in the JOURNAL, were taken as read, confirmed, and signed as correct.

The Hon. Secretary announced the decease of :—

Dr. Joseph Wells, M.A., formerly Warden of Wadham College and Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, elected Hon. Associate 1924.

Charles FitzRoy Doll, elected Fellow 1901. Mr. FitzRoy Doll was a Member of the Practice Standing Committee from 1901 to 1905.

James Kennedy Hunter, elected Fellow 1906. For the past two years Mr. Hunter has been one of the four representatives of the Incorporation of Architects in Scotland on the R.I.B.A. Council. For many years he was a valued member of the Glasgow Institute of Architects and was President of that body in 1926 to 1928.

Edgar John Pullar, elected Associate 1901, Fellow 1910.

Charles Albert Hindle, elected Associate 1892.

John Eustace Salisbury, elected Associate 1927.

Percy P. Nathan, elected Licentiate 1912.

Joseph Lewis Rees, transferred to Licentiate Class, 1926.

Herbert Thompson, elected Licentiate 1911.

And it was Resolved that the regrets of the Institute for their loss be entered on the Minutes and that a message of sympathy and condolence be conveyed to their relatives.

Dr. Leonard Hill, M.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., F.R.S. [*Hon. A.*], having read a Paper on "Modern Methods of Heating and Ventilation," a discussion ensued, and on the motion of Dr. Raymond Unwin [*F.*], seconded by Mr. D. R. Wilson, a vote of thanks was passed to Dr. Hill by acclamation and was briefly responded to.

The proceedings closed at 10.25 p.m.


ARCHITECTS' BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

(*Insurance Department*).

HOUSE PURCHASE SCHEME

(for property in Great Britain only).

The Society is able, through the services of a leading Assurance Office, to assist an Architect (or his client) in securing the capital for the purchase of a house for his own occupation, on the following terms :—

AMOUNT OF LOAN.

Property value exceeding £666, but not exceeding £2,500, 75 per cent. of the value.

Property value exceeding £2,500, but not exceeding £4,500, 66⅔ per cent. of the value.

The value of the property is that certified by the Surveyor employed by the Office.

RATE OF INTEREST, 5½ per cent. gross.

REPAYMENT.

By means of an Endowment Assurance which discharges the loan at the end of 15 or 20 years, or at the *earlier death* of the borrower.

SPECIAL CONCESSION TO ARCHITECTS.

In the case of houses in course of erection, it has been arranged that, provided the Plan and Specification have been approved by the Surveyor acting for the Office, and the amount of the loan agreed upon, and subject to the house being completed in accordance therewith, ONE HALF of the loan will be advanced on a certificate from the Office's Surveyor that the walls of the house are erected and the roof on and covered in.

NOTE.—In 1928, over £20,000 was loaned to architects under this scheme, and as a result over £100 was handed to the Benevolent Fund.

If a quotation is required, kindly send details of your age next birthday, approximate value of house and its exact situation, to the Secretary Architects' Benevolent Society, 9 Conduit Street, London, W.


It is desired to point out that the opinions of writers of articles and letters which appear in the R.I.B.A. JOURNAL must be taken as the individual opinions of their authors and not as representative expression of the Institute.

R.I.B.A. JOURNAL.

DATES OF PUBLICATION. — 1929 : 23 March ; 13, 27 April ; 18 May ; 1, 15, 29 June ; 13 July ; 10 August ; 21 September ; 19 October.